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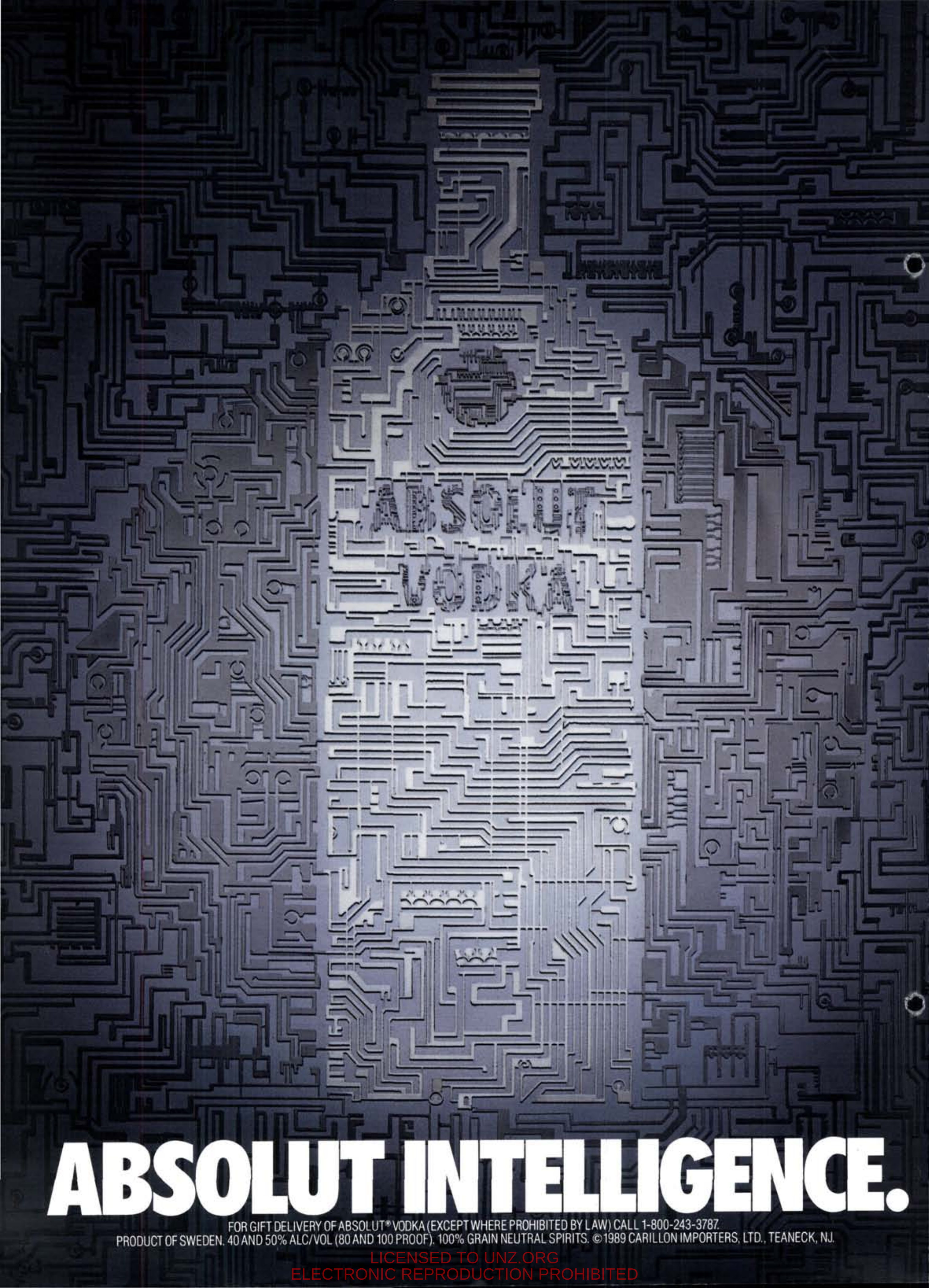
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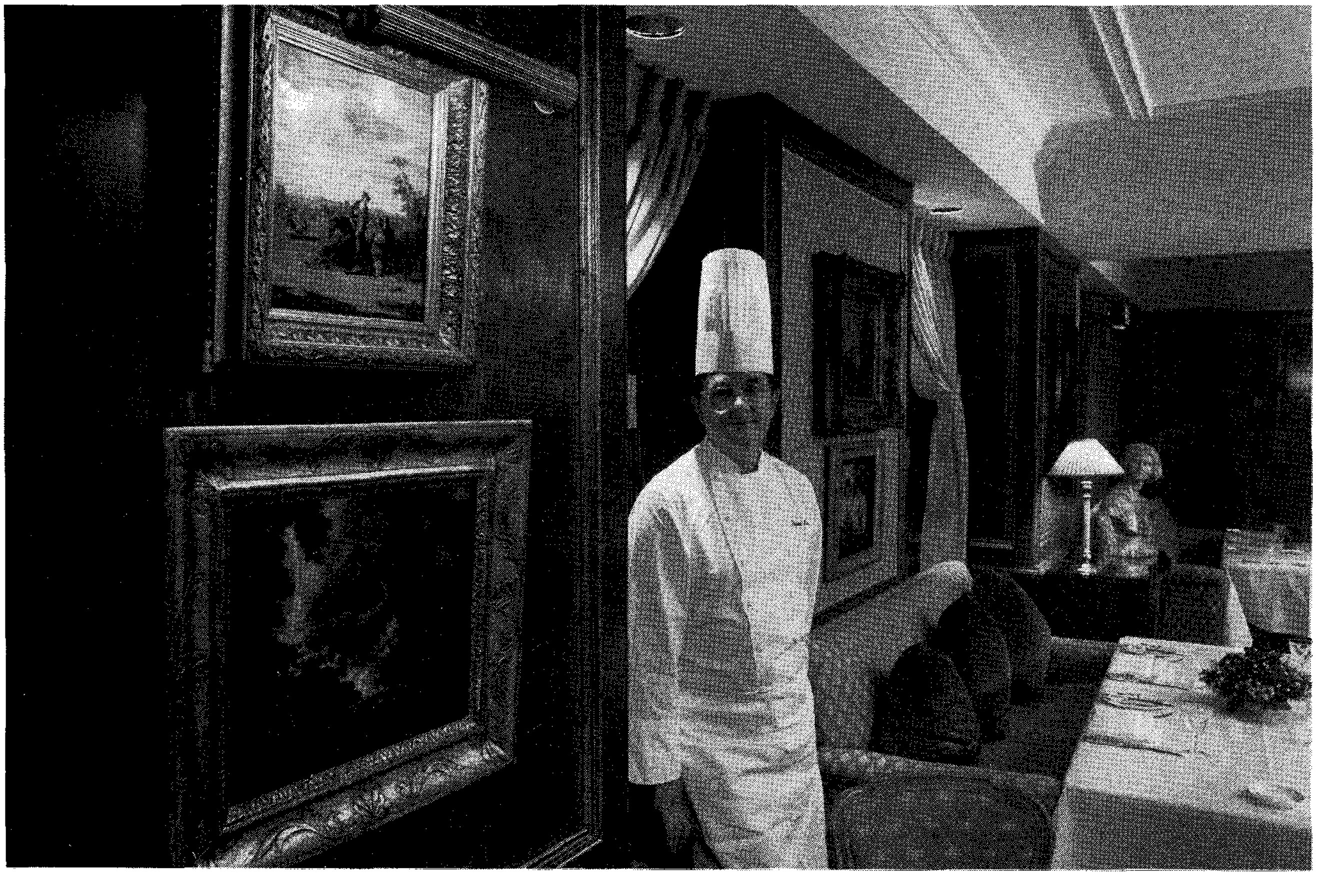

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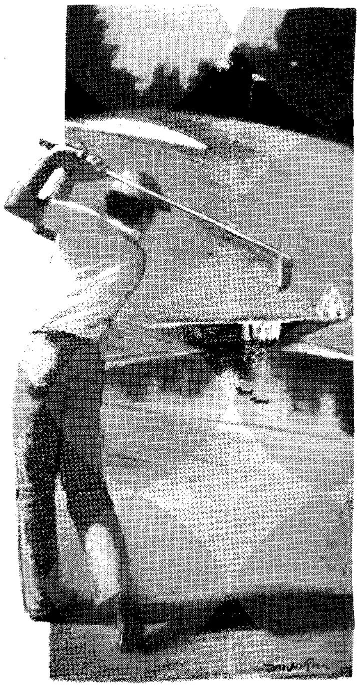

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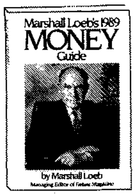
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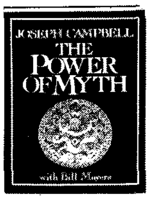
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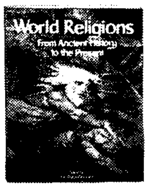
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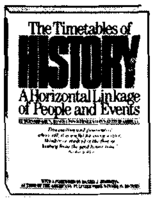
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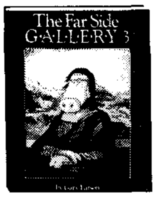
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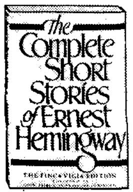
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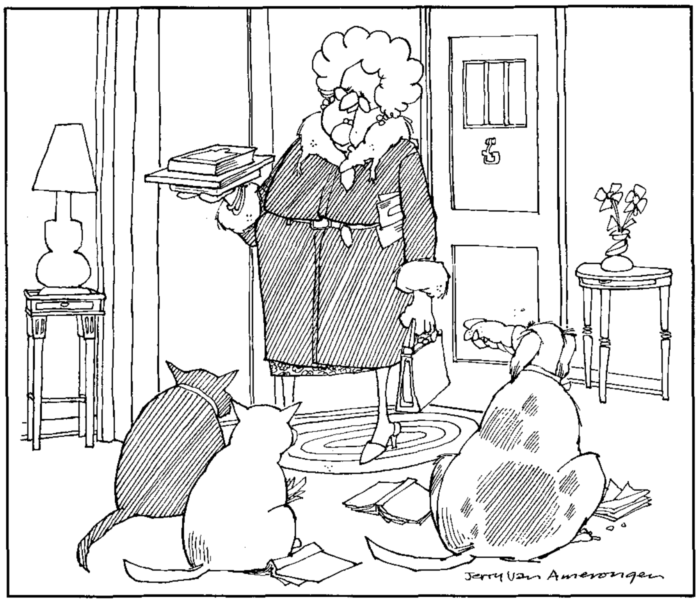
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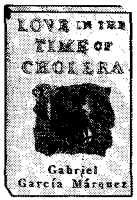
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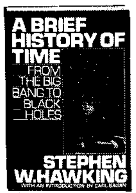
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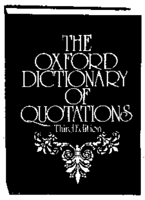
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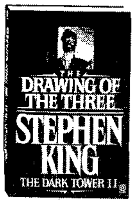
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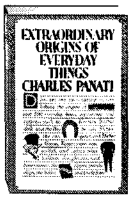
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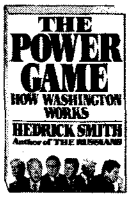
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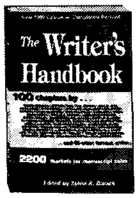
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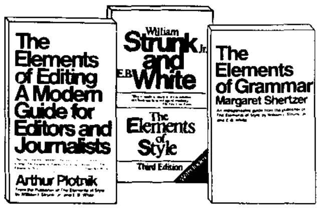
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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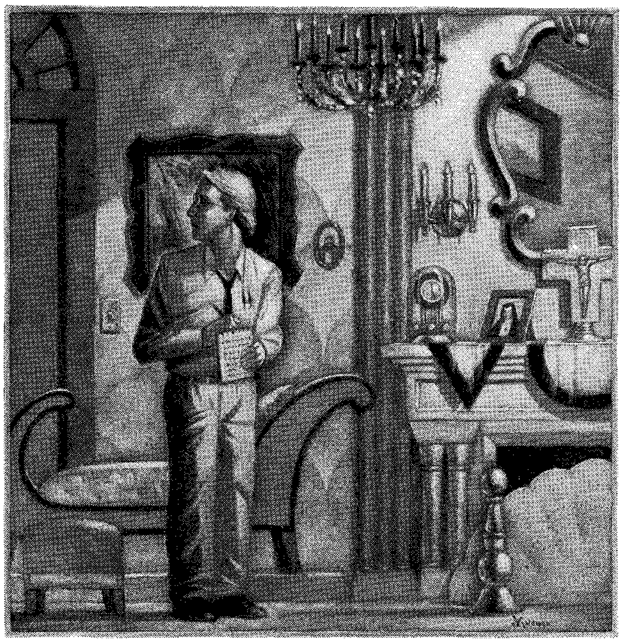
THE THEATRE

THIS week, the Atlantic Theatre Company—that maverick troupe, founded by David Mamet and W. H. Macy, which moves between Vermont and New York, conducts acting classes in conjunction with New York University, and hardly ever puts on plays—will be performing "Rarities," an evening of short works by Mamet, John Guare, Howard Korder, Wallace Shawn, and others, at the Actor's Outlet Theatre.

The Atlantic is one of our favorite young companies. We've taken to thinking of its members privately as the Motion Picture Chums, after a juvenile-series book that we turned up in an antiquarian bookshop when we visited them in Vermont last summer. The designation fits partly because they are clannish, partly because large groups of them make fleeting appearances in movies that Mamet or Macy has something to do with, and partly because whenever we run into them at the corner deli or the Korean fruit stand they always seem to be on the brink of something—like their big break, or an abyss.

This time last year, the company was appearing in Howard Korder's "Boys' Life," at Lincoln Center, and as far as we know they haven't had a New York production since; so the program at the Actors' Outlet is good news. Included on the bill will be a new play by Korder, "Imagining America" (directed by the author himself), Mamet's "Yes But So What," Guare's "The Loveliest Afternoon of the Year," and an excerpt from Shawn's "Our Late Night."

"Rarities" will be presented May 19th and 21st at 8 P.M., and May 20th at 8 and 11 P.M., with a benefit performance at the Lucille Lortel Theatre on May 22nd. (For information, call 226-8417.)



Peter Crombie in "Aristocrats"

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedules and ticket information.)

Arms and the Man—Shaw's comedy, with Daniel Gerroll, Roma Downey, and Christopher Noth. Previews begin May 17. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

The Blessing—A play by Clare Coss, with Anita Gillette, Kelly Bishop, and Louisa Horton. Previews through May 20. Opens May 21 at 3. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

Circle Repertory Company—The final play of the season is **FLORIDA CRACKERS,** a drama by Wm. S. Leavengood about three brothers and their involvement in the drug trade. John Bishop is the director. Previews begin May 17. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

Conversation Among the Ruins—A play by Emilio Carballido, presented by the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre and starring Elizabeth Ruiz Clemens and Mark Morant. Some performances are in English; most are in Spanish. Previews begin May 17. (304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

Cymbeline—The ninth production in the Shakespeare Marathon stars Joan Cusack as Imogen. JoAnne Akalaitis is the director. With an original score by Philip Glass. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

The Investigation of the Murder in El Salvador—A play by Charles Mee, Jr., with music composed and performed by Peter Gordon. Presented by the New York Theatre Workshop. Previews through May 20. Opens May 21 at 7. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 279-4200.)

S. J. Perelman . . . In Person—Lewis J. Stadlen plays the American author and humorist in this one-man show written by Bob Shanks. There will be a preview on May 16. Opens May 17 at 8. (Cherry Lane, 36 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

The Value of Names—A play by Jeffrey Sweet, set in the eighties, about a comedian who was blacklisted during the fifties. With John Seitz; directed by Gloria Muzio. Previews begin May 17. (Gertrude & Irving Dimson Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

NEW THIS SEASON

Approaching Zanzibar—Tina Howe's quirky comedy is about a family of four—father, mother, and two children—who drive across the country to visit the mother's dying great-aunt, an artist in New Mexico. Most of the scenes are funny, or at least touched with a fleck of mystery. Harris Yulin, Jane Alexander, and Bethel Leslie are fine in the leading roles, and so are the actors in support. Directed by Carole Rothman. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/15/89.) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Aristocrats—Brian Friel's portrait of the family of Judge O'Donnell, of Ballybeg Hall, in Donegal, is witty, ironic, and loving. It is faultlessly performed by Niall Buggy (an astonishing actor, who got his start at the Abbey Theatre), Peter Crombie, John Pankow, Kaiulani Lee, John Christopher Jones, and Margaret Colin, among others, under the direction of Robin Lefèvre. Distinguished setting, lighting, and costumes by John Lee Beatty, Dennis Parichy, and Jane Greenwood. (5/8/89) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-0102.)

Black and Blue—An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, Savion Glover, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (2/6/89, under Dancing.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

Born Yesterday—Madeline Kahn's performance as Billie Dawn (the role that made Judy Holliday famous) is the only good thing about this revival of Garson Kanin's 1946 political fable. Ed Asner is entirely inadequate as the scrap-metal tycoon who makes the mistake of hiring a *New Republic* writer to educate his mistress. So, unfortunately, is Daniel Hugh Kelly, who plays the journalist. (2/13/89) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102.)

Brimstone and Treacle—Dennis Potter wrote this stage version of his own 1975 television film, which the BBC, having commissioned and paid for the thing, found too "nauseating" to transmit. (They later broadcast the film, in 1987.) It has none of the subtlety or complexity of either "The Singing Detective" or Potter's novel "Blackeyes." The play is a hodgepodge of images borrowed from Harold Pinter and Peter Nichols—the devil descends on a couple trapped in a benighted existence with their spastic daughter—and seems to date from a period before Dennis Potter figured out that he was Dennis Potter. (Interart, 549 W. 52nd St. 246-1050. Closes May 21.)

Cantorial—Ira Levin's play about a couple who move into a renovated apartment on the Lower East Side that was once a synagogue, only to find that the place is haunted (by the restless spirit of an intrusive cantor, no less). Anthony Fusco and Woody Romoff are as cute as all getout playing, respectively, the young man of uncertain origins who finds himself wanting to be a Jew and the wise old bird who owns the deli across the street. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

The Cocktail Hour—A dramatist returns home to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more engaging. Under Jack O'Brien's direction, Nancy Marchand gives a marvellous performance as the hero's mother and Holland Taylor and Keene Curtis do well also. (11/7/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Eleemosynary—Lee Blessing's bittersweet comedy about three generations of women in an upper-middle-class family should probably be approached as a work-in-progress. But the play is worth seeing, because Joanna Gleason gives one of her exquisitely intelligent performances and because, though the play starts out poorly—the opening sequences seem off-puttingly phony and whimsical—it is, finally, deeply moving. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes May 21.)

Equity Library Theatre—The final production of the season is a revival of **GIGI,** Lerner and Loewe's 1973 musical that was based on the movie of the same name. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. 663-2028. Closes June 4.)

Forbidden Broadway 1989—A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Roxie Lucas, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath—inspired mimics all. (9/26/88) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

The Forbidden City—This domestic drama about a black family living prosperously on the edge of suburban Philadelphia in 1936 was written by Bill Gunn, who died the day before it opened. It's essentially an unfinished play, as full of interest as it is of excess and inconsistency. The writing ranges from the embarrassingly overwrought to the inspired, as does the acting, under Joseph Papp's direction. With Gloria Foster, Akili

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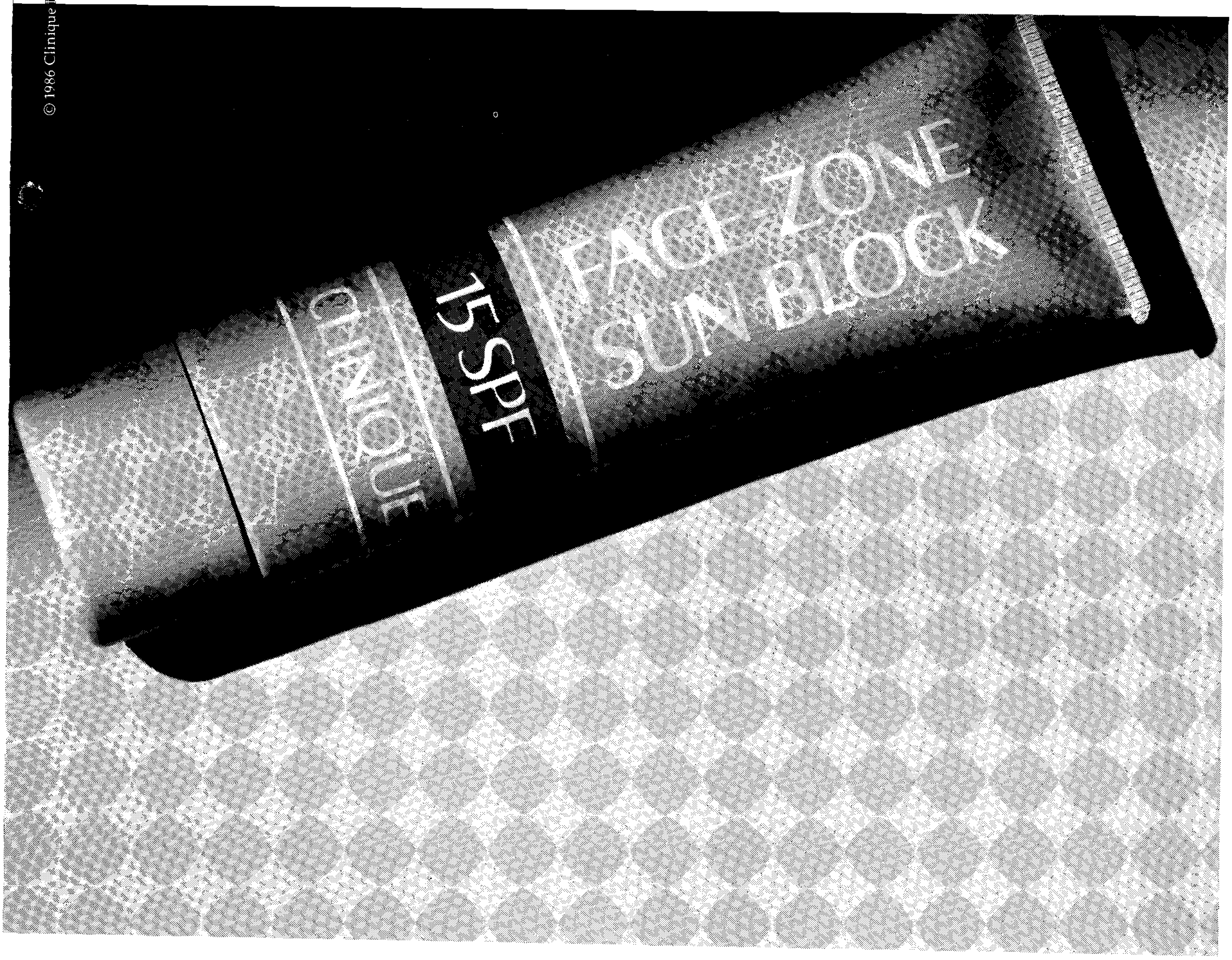

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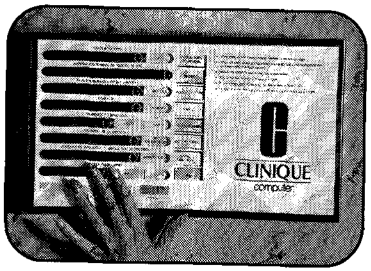

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THE THEATRE–Cont'd

Prince, and Frankie R. Faison. (4/17/89) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Ghetto—A play about an actual theatre in the ghetto in Vilna, Lithuania, during the Holocaust, or, more precisely, a play about an attempt to produce a show there. Joshua Sobol is the author; Stephen McHattie, Jarlath Conroy, and Donal Donnelly, poor souls, appear in the leading roles. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

The Heidi Chronicles—Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, led by Joan Allen. (12/26/88) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

I Could Go On Lip-Synching!—This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, *managing not so much to raise* lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. Certainly this is the strangest show in town. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556.)

Jerome Robbins' Broadway—A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. The evening is an orgy of family entertainment, a display of theatrical arts and crafts, and a canonization of Robbins and his era. Whether the fifties was your generation or your parents', this is the show for you. (3/13/89, under Dancing.) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Kathy and Mo Show: Parallel Lives—Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Largely New York—It would be a mistake to assume that Bill Irwin's dance-mime extravaganza *is* fundamentally boring because it lacks words; in fact, it has the best "book" on Broadway. The piece is partly a send-up of theatrical technology, partly a comment on the ills that beset a pluralistic society, and partly a debate about art. Irwin puts onstage all the conflicts, tensions, and antagonisms of city life and resolves them by a means of an invented language. His solution is unrealistic—it obtains only in a theatre—but what makes the message so uplifting is that to understand it you have to learn a new idiom. (5/15/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

Lend Me a Tenor—The setting of this farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. Philip Bosco, Victor Garber, Tovah Feldshuh, J. Smith-Cameron, Caroline Lagerfelt, Ron Holgate, Jane Connell, and Jeff Brooks make up the splendid cast. (3/13/89) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting a production of Sigmund Romberg's **new moon.** (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Closes May 28.)

Love Letters—Staged readings of A. R. Gurney's new two-character play. May 15 at 8, Joanna Gleason and Richard Thomas; May 21 at 7, Swoosie Kurtz and John Rubinstein; and May 22 at 8, Jane Curtin and Stephen Collins. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

The Night Hank Williams Died—Larry L. King, whose "Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" was a hit some years ago, has again written a strong play with music, set in a saloon in an obscure Texas town in 1952. The performance, under Christopher Ashley's direction, is satisfying and more, and so are Mr. King's songs. With Betsy Aidem, Matt Mulhern, and Darren McGavin. (2/20/89) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Noiresque: The Fallen Angel—A new theatrical work, conceived and staged by Ping Chong. Presented by Pan Asian Rep. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. Closes May 27. For information about tickets, call 245-2660.)

Only Kidding—Jim Geoghan's comedy about standup comedians, in all their panic and desperation, has the ring of authenticity, and jokes that invariably pay off. (One monologue about a Greek restaurant is a knockout.) The characters are an aging Catskill type; a young comedy team, still scrambling for a foothold; a jumpy writer; and a beefbrained manager. All the actors do well, under the lively direction of Larry Arrick. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Other People's Money—Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York stockbroker's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. Kevin Conway can seldom have been better or funnier than he is as Bronx-born Lawrence Garfinkle, and Janet Zarish plays his adversary (with a difference). They are ably supported by Scotty Bloch, James Murtaugh, and Arch Johnson. The performance as a whole is a credit to Gloria Muzio, who directed it. An import from the Hartford Stage Company. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

FROGS & OTHERS

According to legend, frogs infest the Palisades opposite Manhattan, but you only have to go as far as the Village to see similar little running figures painted on the sidewalks everywhere. By a stretch of the imagination, these could be frogs, or animated lima beans, or even frenetic artists' palettes with legs and three strands of hair.

There's an exemplary section of pavement on the northeast corner at Bleecker and LaGuardia, which features the creatures in black, blue, and white, heading in various directions. Across the street, there's a red one. Their presence cries out for some enterprising artist with a jackhammer to pry them up and frame them in curbstones before bolting them in place on a wall with last year's multicolored turtles, snakes, and bats, not to mention those mysterious purple footprints that were running everywhere for a while. Then it's just a matter of waiting for the right collector to jog by.

Are the frogs actually going anywhere? No one seems to know. Whatever their destination, until the marks fade a bit more, watch out for people with their heads down, scanning the sidewalks. They may only be looking for loose change, but, then again, some of them may be on art expeditions.

Rumors—This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has written. It is acted to perfection by Christine Baranski, Ron Leibman, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (11/28/88) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Shirley Valentine—Pauline Collins gives a funny, beguiling performance as a Liverpool housewife who, feeling herself engulfed by drab domesticity, flies off to Greece, where she finds a temporary lover and lives happily ever after. Miss Collins is the only actor, and she is backed every inch of the way by Willy Russell, who wrote the play, and by Simon Callow, who directed it. (2/27/89) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Songs of Paradise—A musical based on the works of the Yiddish poet Itsik Manger. In Yiddish and English; with a book by Miriam Hoffman and Rena Berkowicz Borow, and music by Rosalie Gerut. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes May 21.)

Starmites—This musical about a girl who enters the world of her favorite comic-book characters is pretty much what you'd expect. The style of the main plot—visually and otherwise—leans toward Michael Jackson, aerobic dancing, and Andrew Lloyd Webber; the style of the subplot is more in the direction of leather. We lasted almost to intermission. (Criterion Center Stage Right, Broadway at 45th St. 239-6200.)

A Tale of Two Cities—Everett Quinton's over-the-top one-man version of Dickens' novel has Miss Pross literally hanging from the ceiling. Unfortunately, his performance is more spirited than it is consistently funny. Best is the word "BLOOD" scrawled on the bathroom wall. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

A Thrill a Moment—A musical revue featuring songs that William (Mickey) Stevenson, who was once head of A. & R. at Motown, had a hand in creating. You'll hear "Devil with the Blue Dress On," "Pride and Joy," and "Dancing in the Street," to name a few. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 869-3981. Closes May 28.)

Yankee Dawg You Die—A two-character play by Philip Kan Gotanda, with Stan Egi and Sab Shimono. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

LONG RUNS

anything goes: This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Leslie Uggams and Bill McCutcheon, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction, and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **a chorus line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **driving miss daisy:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **the fantasticks:** The longest-running long run recently turned twenty-nine. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **into the woods:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful and funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363.) . . . **m. butterfly:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with John Rubinstein and B. D. Wong. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.) . . . **me and my girl:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **les misérables:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **the phantom of the opera:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **sarafina!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.) . . . **steel magnolias:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)

DANCE

FOR truffles, you go to the Périgord region of Southern France. For "Serenade," Balanchine's testament to young people dancing, you go to the School of American Ballet Workshop, for the Suki Schorer staging. Schorer, a brilliant allegro stylist, was a member of New York City Ballet from 1959 to 1972. In "Serenade," she performed the technically demanding role of the Russian Girl, the part that Kyra Nichols now commands.

Since the early nineteen-seventies, Schorer has been on the S.A.B. faculty; she currently teaches advanced technique, and variations for girls. She has staged "Serenade" for the school on three occasions: in 1974; in 1984, for S.A.B.'s fiftieth anniversary; and for workshop performances this month (on the 20th and 22nd at Juilliard). Each "Serenade" staging has been a slightly different process. This time, she asked Maria Calegari to work on the "Dark Angel" section and Kipling Houston to refine the "Elegy." Schorer and her consultants have been more explicit about the ballet's visionary imagery with the latest cast. Calegari spoke to them of how the Dark Angel is "the force, the power. She lifts her hand from the man's eyes and *lets* him see." During a recent rehearsal, Schorer advised the Waltz Girl to curl her hands before her face and stretch her upper body wide, like a person waking up. Later, Schorer told us, "The easiest things to teach in 'Serenade' are the counts and the steps. The hardest is to get the right look of the whole. The arms are set but they're more free than, say, in 'Concerto Barocco.' The steps all come out of the music, in waves. Performing the ballet is hard to learn, too. Mr. B. used to say that you have to give two performances to grasp a role; one performance is nothing. He also used to say, 'It's like pulling teeth. I should have been a dentist.' "

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—May 16 at 8: "Interplay," "Danses Concertantes," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ May 17 at 8: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ May 18 at 8: "Ballo della Regina," "The Waltz Project," and "Brahms/Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ May 19 at 8: "Swan Lake," "In the Night," and "Black & White." . . . ¶ May 20 at 2: "Swan Lake," "Rhapsody in Blue," and "Brahms/Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ May 20 at 8: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ May 21 at 1: "Interplay," "The Waltz Project," and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ May 21 at 7: "Black & White," "In the Night," "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ May 23 at 8: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ May 24 at 8: "Swan Lake," "The Waltz Project," and "The Unanswered Question." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 25.)

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE—May 15 at 8: "Les Sylphides," "Prodigal Son," and "Bourrée Fantasque." . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Some Assembly Required" (New York première), "The Informer," and "Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1." . . . ¶ May 17 at 2: "Theme and Variations," "Airs," and "Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1." . . . ¶ May 17 at 8: "Ballet Imperial," "The Informer," and "Gaîté Parisienne." . . . ¶ May 18 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "The Garden of Villandry" (New York première), "The Informer," and "Gaîté Parisienne." . . . ¶ May 19 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "The Fugue," "Airs," and "Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1." . . . ¶ May 20 at 2: "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes," "Some Assembly

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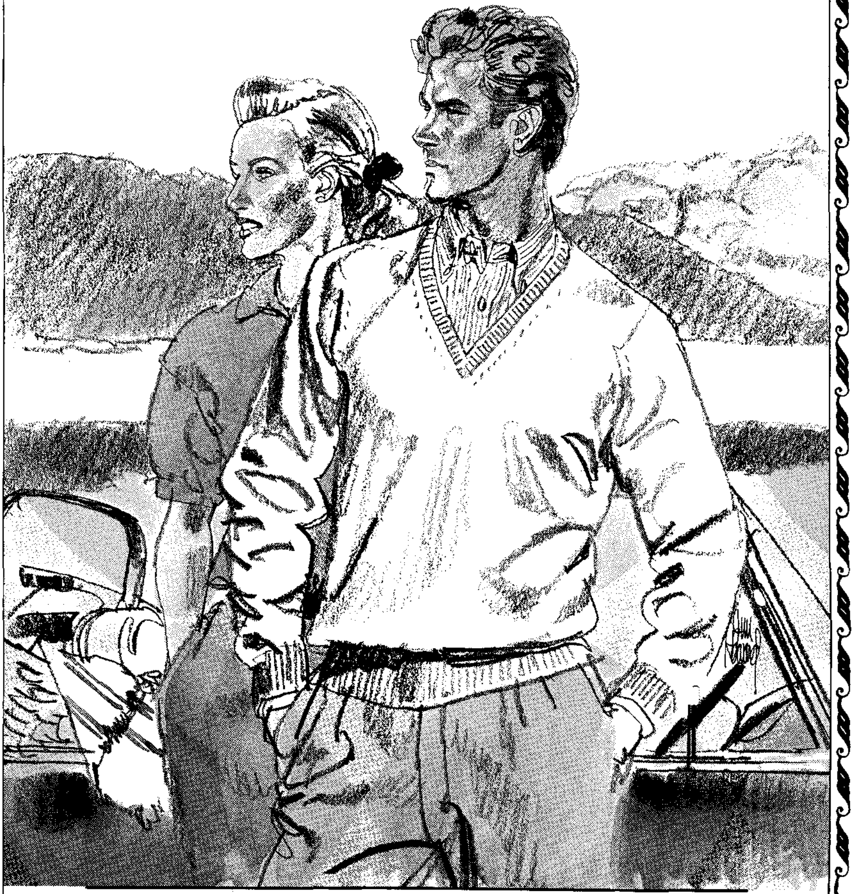

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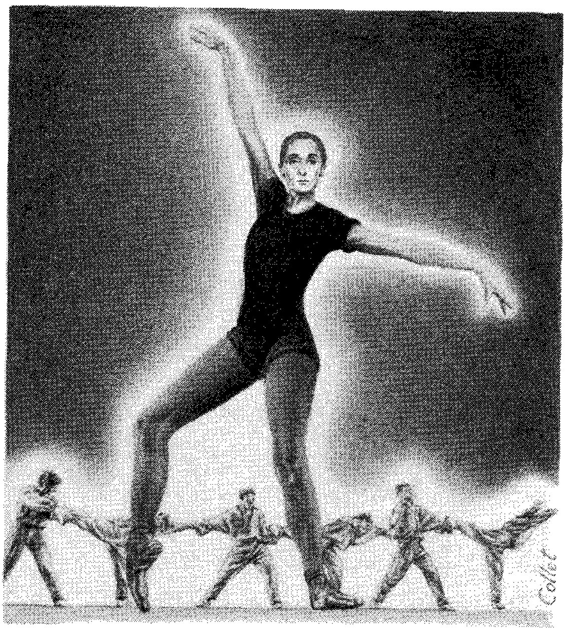


Twyla Tharp

Required," "The Garden of Villandry," and "Theme and Variations." . . . ¶ May 20 and May 22 at 8: The New York premières of Twyla Tharp's "Bum's Rush," "Quartet," and "Everlast," plus Tharp's "In the Upper Room." . . . ¶ May 23 at 8, and May 24 at 2 and 8: "Romeo and Juliet." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through July 1.)

Africa Oyé!—Eight music and dance groups from western and central Africa. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. May 16-19 at 8; May 20 at 2 and 8; May 21 at 3 and 7:30; and May 23-24 at 8. Through May 28.)

Armitage Ballet—Two works: "Go Go Ballerina" and "Contempt." David Salle and Jeff Koons designed the sets and costumes for both. (Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. 541-8900. May 16-18 at 9.)

Jazz Tap Ensemble—A company of four tap dancers and four musicians. Program A: May 16 at 7:30, May 17 and May 20 at 8, and May 21 at 2. . . . ¶ Program B: May 18-19 at 8, May 20 at 2, and May 21 at 7:30. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

"Kiyotsune: Death of a Warrior"—A Noh theatre work adapted by Ryo Noda, and performed by a nine-member company. (Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. 752-3015. May 17-19 at 8.)

"Moving/Music"—Dance-music collaborations by choreographers Nadine Tringali and Merle Matsunaga, with composer Jeffrey Schanzer. (Dia Art Foundation, 155 Mercer St. May 17 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

"Dancing Into Natural History"—Dance and music performances at the American Museum of Natural History. Douglas Dunn has created a work that will be given in the Hall of Late Dinosaurs. Other participants include Stephan Koplowitz, who has choreographed a piece for the Hall of Ocean Life, and Mieczyslaw Litwinski and Dan Froot, who will do some musical improvising in the Hall of Oceanic Birds. (Central Park W. at 79th St. May 17 at 7:30 and May 20 at 2 and 3. No charge beyond the usual museum admission.)

Kei Takei's Moving Earth—In the première of "The Last Rice Field" and a revival of "One Woman's Death." (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. May 17-21 and May 24 at 7:30. Through May 28.)

Diane Jacobowitz Dance Theatre—Premières by Anna Sokolow and Ms. Jacobowitz. (Triangle Theatre, Long Island University, Flatbush and DeKalb Aves., Brooklyn. 1-718 467-2725. May 19-20 at 8, and May 21 at 2 and 5:30.)

Sarah Skaggs—Presenting a program of contemporary dance. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. May 19-21 at 9.)

Tibetan Dance Company—A group from Dharamsala, India, in classical Tibetan dances, scenes from Tibetan operas, and monastic dances. A lecture will precede the dancing. (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. May 20 at 8, and May 21 at 6. Tickets at the door.)

NIGHT LIFE

We were in the theatre district the other night, just as the curtains were falling and the streets filling up, and as we walked by clusters of people discussing nosh alternatives we decided to look in on Indigo Blues, one of the new music venues that have sprung up in the area recently, along with all the steel and glass. The club, in the basement of the Hotel Edison, at 221 West 46th Street, opened a few months ago, and it's a chic-looking place, with a glass-brick reception area, an oval blond-wood bar, and Future World blue-neon light fixtures. (You feel as if you were inside a computer terminal.) Up front is a big, carpeted room with lots of tables and a wide stage. We took a seat at the bar, and soon the blues singer Jimmy Witherspoon came out with his band (a drummer, a bassist, and a pianist who looks like Don King, except that he grins more). Witherspoon, who calls himself Spoon, is a middle-aged Arkansan with graying hair and aviator glasses, and for the evening's crooning he had chosen a tight-fitting light-gray suit and a fluorescent-green shirt. He opened with a few blues standards, and then delivered his own "Don't Gotta" ("I don't gotta take you to the dentist tomorrow, 'cause I'm knocking out your teeth tonight"). He started another number, but then stopped the band. "There's only three tempos—fast, medium, and slow," he explained. "If you fall in the crevices in between, you're in trouble."

The front room filled up steadily during the set, mostly with well-dressed people clutching *Playbills*, and the expanding audience seemed to heat up the band: the songs became livelier, and Spoon's patter more sardonic. After a particularly rousing number, he said, "I was sitting at the bar before the show tonight, and a guy came in and said to me, 'Is this where Jimmy Witherspoon is playing tonight?' So I looked at him and I said, 'Nope.' "

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**christopher mason**—purveyor of canned chit-chat and singer-composer of not one but two ditties about Ivana Trump—says, "Now for some songs about rich people," and means it. This goes on in the Oak Room Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Thirty-year-olds in love call **mabel godwin** "a *scandal*." Now in her seventies, she remains a singer of racy jazz numbers, a devout chatterer, a wearer of gold lamé suits, and a pianist who perks along quite nicely to the accompaniment of a snare and a standup bass. Ms. Godwin performs Thursdays through Saturdays from nine-thirty. On Sundays, cornettist **lee lorenz** leads the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band, and on Mondays the Grove Street Stompers do their Dixieland thing. Arthur's is currently decorated for the holidays—Christmas, New Year's, Halloween, and St. Patrick's Day.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. The purr-and-growler **eartha kitt** performs Tuesdays and Wednesdays at nine and Thursdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven.

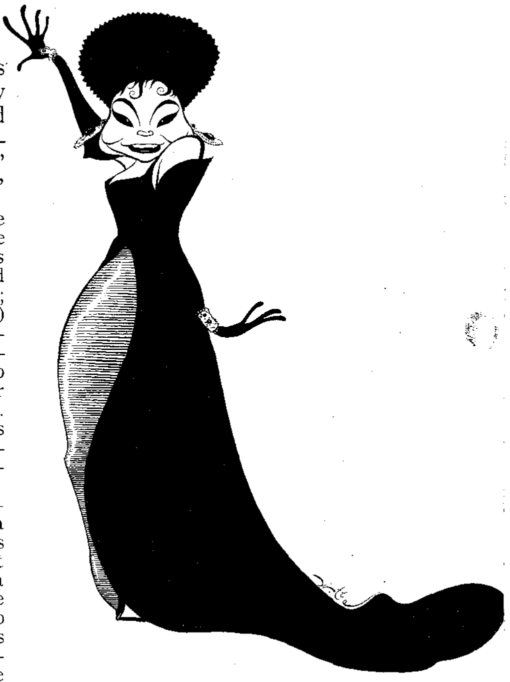
Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turn over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar, in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A glitzy, color-coördinated jazz house, designed for maximum seating efficiency, where blue-suspendered waitresses sweep by your table bearing shrimp cocktails, champagne, and other trappings of the good life. After the show, out-of-towners flock to the upstairs souvenir shop, where, at last check, Blue Note golf balls were still available. **dizzy gillespie,** the bebop pioneer with the elastic cheeks, blows his bent trumpet May 16-21; trumpeter **maynard ferguson** plays watery pop-jazz (you may remember his version of the theme from "Rocky") beginning May 23. Music from nine. Dining.

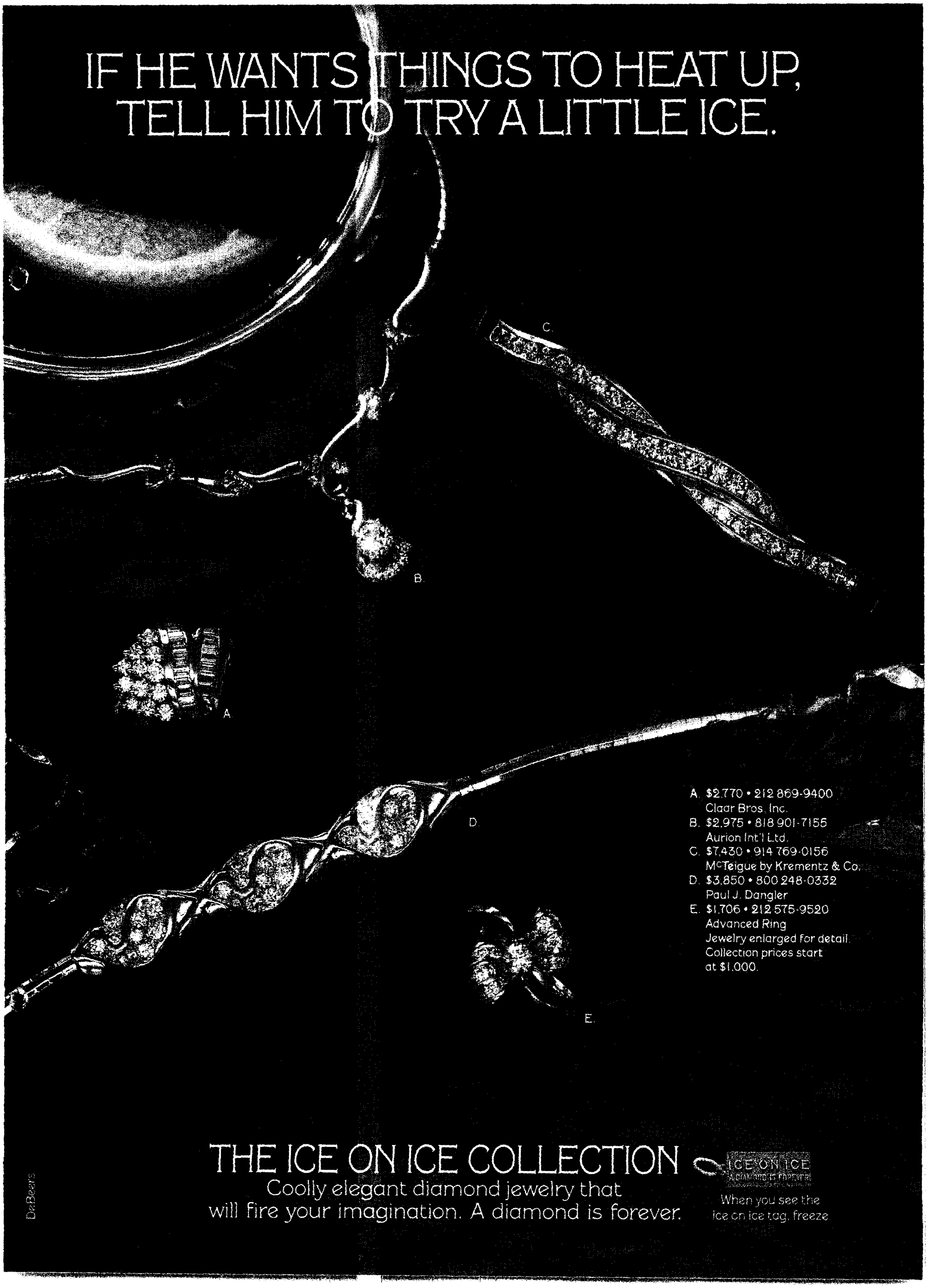
Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says Uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing here and there—the place looks like the outside of a van. If you end up without a seat, you can stand at the bar—finally a club where they don't force you to drink—and mull over photographs from great shows you've missed. On May 16, the stage belongs to the **reivers,** a cheery, sixties-tinged pop-rock outfit based in Austin. Saxophonist **john lurie** and his **lounge lizards** come in on May 18. **foster & lloyd** will be here on May 23 and the **new grass revival** on May 24. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A Village bar that has long featured first-rate piano-bass teams and pro conversationalists and that now also features Bradley's T-shirts, Bradley's sweatshirts, Bradley's customized coasters, a person to take an admission fee, and a person to seat you and shush you. It's an institution. The p.-b. duos: May 15-20, **kenny barron** and **santi debriano;** starting May 22, **steve kuhn** and **buster williams.** A trio comprising drummer David Earle Johnson, pianist Dan Wall, and Debriano holds forth on May 21. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and



Eartha Kitt at the Ballroom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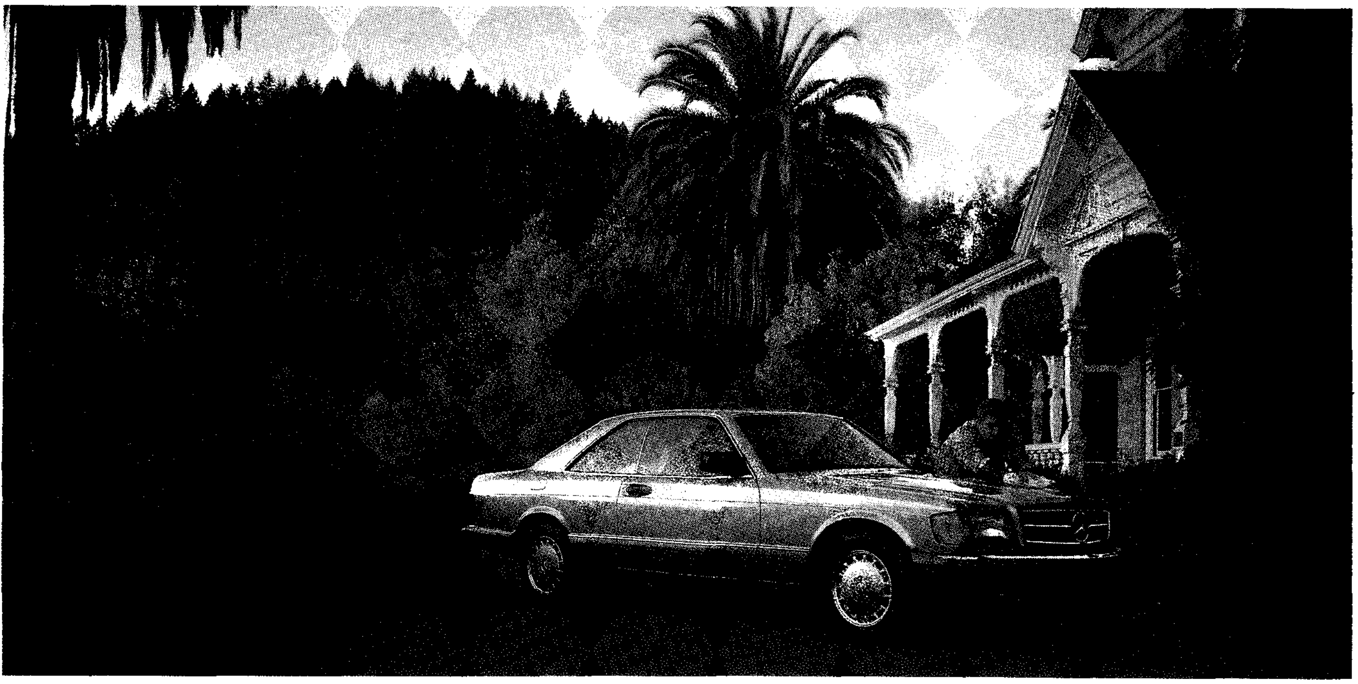

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long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. Music from nine-thirty.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, three walls of Vertès murals, and, for the next several weeks, singer and pianist **BOBBY SHORT,** who first entered this room in 1968, liked it, and decided to stay. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—This room, which caters to thrash-metal buffs and cooler heads on weeknights, opens its doors on Sundays to swing-music fans, most of whom come to Lindy. Feet jitter, skirts fly, and a limber, nattily dressed gent gets a look on his face that says "Watch my next move, darlin'." Up by the stage, two men who have come stag scatter their feet when the band breaks into "Jumpin' at the Woodside." The New York Swing Dance Society organizes these Sunday-night meetings; on May 21, it brings in Al Cobbs' eighteen-piece C. & J. Band, featuring vocalist Lord Burbage. On May 23, Joan Jett sidemen converge with Lou Reed sidemen, resulting in Plowteam. Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—In the late seventies and early eighties, this dark cave (grafittied walls, a battered pool table, rest rooms for the intrepid only) was the hub of a thriving punk-music scene—Blondie, Talking Heads, the Ramones, and Television were regular attractions. Local rock has since diminished, but while other clubs of the era (notably Max's Kansas City) have fizzled, CB's perseveres, and young hopefuls continue to fill the stage nightly. The **HEADLESS HORSEMEN,** four fun-loving sixties archivists who play solid, punched-up numbers by the Beatles, the Flamin' Groovies, and themselves, are here on May 20. Music from nine-thirty on weeknights and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Dan Lynch, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—Outside Dan Lynch, you'll come across a lot of suspicious characters who'll claim to know you; inside you'll find a pupil-dilating, brown-on-brown bar decorated with an Aretha poster and remnants of a birch tree. The place brightens up considerably at ten with a variety of live blues, including vamps of the "put on your red dress" variety.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A pleasant hangout for white-collar trash, where you'll find cold Dixie beer, collard greens, and plenty of men who know how to wear a leather vest. As if that weren't enough, the bar-and-restaurant also features a corrugated-tin ceiling and a truckload of sort-of-Southern items: a photo booth, a giant Amoco sign, an Evel Knievel lunchbox. Most nights, the buffet turns into a bandstand at nine. If you're lucky, you'll hear authentic country songs about Queens. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—On Fridays, in the back room of this Irish bar, you can drink a tankard of cool stout and listen to fiddlers and uilleann pipers and sweet Irish voices; on Saturdays you can drink from the cup that cheers and listen to bluegrass and old-timey music.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—This low-ceilinged, belowstairs jazz room, its walls decorated with alternating bands of mirror and red plush, will seem intimate to some people and too intimate to tall people, who may want to remove their top hats before entering. May 16-21, tenor saxophonist **SCOTT HAMILTON** is here, with just about the same lineup he had when, in 1976, he left his native Providence for this city. Another tenor man, **GEORGE COLEMAN,** takes over on May 23. He and his quartet are rooted in Memphis blues, and they like to swing hard. Mondays remain in the hands of guitarist **LES PAUL,** the guitarist, guitar-builder, and overdubbing pioneer.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—The kind of classy place where no sooner do they give you a plate than they take it away. Fortune Garden is decorated for a greenhouse effect, and the priorities here are Chinese food, hanging plants, and jazz, in that order. The Bob Alexander trio will perform May 16-21. **ROGER KELLAWAY**—a pianist who grew up wearing out George Shearing records—shares the honors with bassist **JAY LEONHART** May 23-28. Fridays and Saturdays in the lounge, bassist **LEON (BOOTS) MALESON** and singer-pianist **DARYL SHERMAN** hold forth. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

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ART OF INTERRUPTION

Twenty years ago, architects were still talking about master plans—schemes for designing or redesigning entire cities. Ten years ago, they talked about design guidelines—schemes for making new buildings look *as if they were part of master plans. Today, especially among younger architects, the conversation is about "interventions"—projects designed to look as unlike master plans as possible. Interventions are about the short-term, the small-scale, the art of the one-shot deal. They're the architectural equivalent of street theatre: a little commotion that comes out of nowhere, interrupts routine, and attracts a quick crowd, in the spirit of check-it-out. A selection of interventions is on view in "Public Work," an exhibition sponsored by the Architectural League of New York at The Urban Center (457 Madison Ave.). The projects, all by architects out of school ten years or less, include the redesign of an abandoned stretch of elevated railroad line in Boston, and "Gateway for the West Coast," described by the architects as "a theatre in which the automobile is a character."*

Indigo Blues, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A new jazz club, in the basement of the Hotel Edison. It's awash in blue neon, and has a fancy sound system and a shiny dance floor. Miles Davis, whose disdain for night clubs is well known ("plantation" was his term for one famous room) and who had managed to stay out of them since 1975, christened this place a few months ago. Drummer **MICHAEL CARVIN** propels a quartet May 16-21, and **ABBEY LINCOLN,** the singer, songwriter, and sometime actress, gets started on May 23.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. May 16-20, **PETER MALINVERNI**—a pianist who sometimes makes it up as he goes along—shares the duties with Peter O'Leary. May 21 is the property of singer, pianist, and hot patootie **PHOEBE LÉGÈRE.** Starting May 23, **BILL MAYS,** who's worked the ivories for Sarah Vaughan and Al Jarreau, performs with bassist **JOHN GOLDSBY.** Music from about nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music and performing space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on cover charges are enlightened. On May 17, **BIRDSONGS OF THE MESOZOIC,** a vaguely Philip Glass-ish collective from Boston, performs. On May 18, the group **TIREZ TIREZ** says, "Wake up and check your pulse." May 19-20 will feature performances by the guitarist **BILL FRISELL,** among others. Music after nine.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—Now New York's lone Lone Star. There's no lizard nesting on the roof, but there's more legroom, better sight lines, and fancier grub than there was at the old Fifth Avenue address. The façade is a Silver Eagle bus, the kind your itinerant musician tools around in. The inside is upscale roadhouse; it has a couple of postage-stamp dance floors and some real pretty Gibson guitars adorning the walls. **MOJO NIXON**—a flaky rock and roller whose new single is "Debbie Gibson is Pregnant with My Two-Headed Love Child"—performs May 16-17. On May 19, ex-Band men **LEVON HELM** and **RICK DANKO** will perform with their respective groups. **WILLY DE VILLE** performs on May 20. Mondays belong to R. & B. singer **RUTH BROWN.** Music after nine.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the "Hoboken sound" and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. Manhattanites who stay through the second set will need their Scout training to get home, but the smell of the nearby Maxwell House factory may give them a boost.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and their high-heeled foxes. **MARY CLEERE HARAN,** a native San Franciscan who flirted with hippiedom before embracing Berlin, Porter, Gershwin, and Weill, takes the bandstand May 16-20. **ANITA O'DAY,** who sang with Gene Krupa in the forties, leads a latter-day Krupa band beginning May 23. Dining.

L'Omnibus de Maxim's, 680 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (980-6988)—A don't-clap-just-rattle-your-jewelry kind of place, where patrons eat pasta from deep dishes and dip French fries into silver gravy boats filled with ketchup. Wednesdays through Sundays at 9:30, **STEVE ROSS** offers what he refers to as "a low-impact, high-density performance," heavily spiked with the transatlantic chatter of Cole Porter and Noël Coward. Ross—who bounces around his Steinway like an amiable marionette—is a nimble pianist, although after seeing the way he pounces on the pedals, one might hesitate to go driving with him.

Speakeasy, 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—The kind of murky, vinyl-and-mirrors lounge one might find in a sunken ocean liner. Onstage, performers pick, strum, and fiddle, and get worked up about long-gone friends and life on the run. If they're nervous, the master of ceremonies—a bearded guy in a red sweatshirt who sits at the back of the room—will say things like "You're doing fine" and "*Rock* it." Music from about eight-thirty.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. **MC COY TYNER** is here every night but Monday, with the bassist **AVERY SHARPE** and the drummer **AARON SCOTT.** Tyner played with John Coltrane in the early sixties, and has been watched closely since. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half century, this establishment was once described by the late Max Gordon as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." Trumpeter **RED RODNEY,** who worked with Charlie Parker in the early fifties, entered musical purgatory shortly thereafter, and then, in the early seventies, rediscovered the light of bop, leads his quintet May 16-21. Pianist **TOMMY FLANAGAN** and his trio punch in on May 23. Mondays are reserved for the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music after ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, lightly forested bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. Pianist **DICK KATZ** and bassist **VICTOR GASKIN** hold forth through May 20. Music from eight weeknights and Sundays from seven.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

THERE were lots of close-cropped men in navy-blue middies navigating the Flatiron district two weeks ago, but the beachhead where the men in uniform stood out most prominently was Live Bait. Live Bait is a restaurant-bar that features about a doz-

NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

en kinds of beer, a selection of mixed drinks guaranteed to get you plastered quicker than Sheetrock, some fairly authentic, moderately realized Southern eat-in-the-kitchen cuisine, and a through-rain-sleet-and-dark-of-night-loyal clientele, who are just about the best-looking bunch of tailored young boozehounds that ever tried to stare through wire-rimmed lenses.

The drop-shouldered, stressed-leather folks who hang out at nearby Rascals and Café Iguana go back and forth between those two bars but rarely show themselves at Live Bait. The former two spots are very Camaro, the latter very Jeep Cherokee. The Navy men were also a novelty at Live Bait, and they were accorded celebrity status. Civilian guys, rejected by women at the bar, befriended the eager servicemen and returned to their intendeds with newfound cachet. Other women decked one of the swabs by continually switching names among themselves, confusing the guy until he howled like a coyote with his foot in a trap. A sailor who had made a pass at someone's fiancée apologized by saying, "I drink like a Navy man. I fight like a Navy man. But I also eat dirt like a Navy man." Some of the women thought that, alongside the usual clique of ponytailed, Dockers-clad jocks, the strangers were cute in an "On the Town" sort of way. One woman took advantage of her Knicks-game-distracted date and pointed out a square-jawed seaman to her friend, whispering, "I'd love to be promiscuous. But I've blocked out how." So much for a girl in every port.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Lisa Kron—P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. May 18-21 at 9:30. Through June 4.

Tina Dudek and David Van Tieghem—In "The Ghost Writer." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. May 19-20 at 11.)

1989 Tour of World Figure Skating Champions—With Katarina Witt, Jill Trenary, Brian Boitano, Brian Orser, and others. (Byrne Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. May 21 at 2. . . . ¶ Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 587-9222. May 24 at 8.)

La Mama—An eleven-day music festival. May 18-19 at 10: Arthur Russel. . . . ¶ May 20-21 at 10: Joshua Fried. . . . ¶ May 22 at 9: Peter Zummo, with Arthur Russel and Bill Ruyle. (74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Through May 29.)

ART

TWO life-size tinsel-tinted statues of a mounted Don Quixote de la Mancha are the centerpieces of Izhar Patkin's current exhibition at the Holly Solomon Gallery. Standing proud, bedazzled, and alone in two separate rooms, these aluminum displays really *are* centerpieces, waiting for the party to begin, like a carved-ice sculpture that Francis Ford Coppola might have ordered up to dress Don Corleone's table at a mob wedding banquet. Patkin's Don sits sidesaddle, with a bundle of books at each flank. He grasps a closed volume in his left hand and looks into both the mirror and the book he holds aloft on the right. The literary conceit here is that he is reading his own sequel, the Segunda Parte, which Cervantes actually wrote in response to an unauthorized Part Two, by another author, published not long after the success of the original. These statuary renderings of the Quixote cliché are at once excessively familiar and self-consciously arcane—two necessary qualities for anything postmodern, and essential, also, for anything camp.

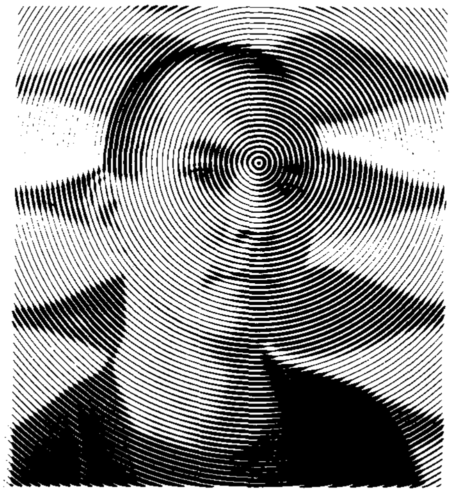
Patkin's distortions of chronological perspective, his elaborate process (the statues are part of an edition of five, and involve clay modelling, wax casting, body casting, foundry casting, and patinas), and the picaresque significance of his subject echo the work of architects like Michael Graves and Arata Isozaki, with their mixed historical signals, revived building crafts, and heavy symbolism. The statues' qualities also remind us of the twisted gentility, the cosmetic rituals, and the heroic-pathetic ethos of the postwar drag queen. Don Quixote himself, along with other deluded visionaries of fiction recently revived, such as Baron Munchausen and Phileas Fogg, might in fact serve as an ideal model for the architects and impersonators trying to embolden our view with theatrical effects—with windmills and hot-air balloons.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Goya and the Spirit of Enlightenment," a major exhibition of paintings and works on paper by this intense and elusive giant (1746-1828), which proposes the artist as philosopher and political theorist. The installation is a little low on visual magic, and a little long on wall labels. Of particular interest are two self-portraits: a young Goya working by the light of a candle-holding hat; an old, sick Goya attended by his physician. Through July 16. . . . ¶ "American Porcelain: 1770-1920." Through June 25. . . . ¶ Fifty Ming and Ch'ing dynasty (fifteenth through seventeenth century) paintings from the museum's collection. Through Aug. 27. . . . ¶ The roof garden has opened for the season. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"America Worked: The 1950s Photographs of Dan Weiner." Through July 11. . . . ¶ "Minor White: The Eye That Shapes." Through June 18. . . . ¶ The sculptor Scott Burton's installation of Brancusis from the permanent collection. Through May 31. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A retrospective of Austrian artist Arnulf Rainer's paintings and works on paper. (A complementary show is at the Austrian Cultural Institute, 11 E. 52nd St.) Through July 9. . . . ¶ Nineteen collages and assemblages by Hannelore Baron (1926-87), dating from 1975 to 1984. Starts May 19. (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)



Philip Taaffe

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The Biennial. Through July 9. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—An exhibit of sixty-six lacquerware dishes, boxes, and bottles from China, Japan, Korea, Burma, Thailand, and Iran. Through June 14. . . . ¶ A show of the museum's Georgia O'Keeffe holdings (twelve pieces), including five paintings and one pastel drawing that came through a recent bequest. Through June 19. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—The annual exhibition of works by newly elected members (Jasper Johns, Jane Freilicher, John Cage, Mary McCarthy, and others) and by recipients of Academy-Institute awards, among them Isaac Bashevis Singer, Richard Rogers, Rackstraw Downes, and Anne Arnold. Manuscripts, paintings, drawings, and sculptures. Starts May 18. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—"George Nakashima: Full Circle" is a show of furniture by a woodworker who favors an organic approach to tables, chairs, cabinets, and lamps. Through Aug. 13. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Two hundred years' worth of French design, in honor of the bicentennial of the French Revolution. Through July 16. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A small sampling of views of Venice and Paris by Francesco Guardi (paintings), Charles Meryon (prints), and James A. M. Whistler (pastels and prints). Guardi may have looked closely at Venice's canals, but Whistler makes you want to travel down them. Through June 18. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—Paintings, drawings, and sculptures by eighteen Israeli artists, responding to their country's political and social conflicts of the past decade. Through Aug. 6. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Words of Blood, Images of Fire," another tribute to the French Revolution, includes Robespierre's holograph of a speech Saint-Just gave attacking Danton; a sketch (attributed to David) of Robespierre on the day of his execution; and letters, more speeches, and memoranda. Through Aug. 20. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—The first installment in a two-part retrospective of Nancy Spero's works includes her protest scroll "Torture of Women." Starts May 19. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library at Lincoln Center—A fine overview of the evolution of Baroque string instruments, represented by members of the violin family from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries; X-rays showing the intricate construction of some of the instruments; and a video with an elaborate sound system, featuring performances on viola da gamba, viola d'amore, and English violet. Through June 10. (Open Mondays and Thursdays, 10 to 8; Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10 to 6; Wednesdays and Fridays, noon to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Walter De Maria—"13, 14, 15 Sided Open Polygons" (1984), in stainless steel, each with a movable ball. Through May 27. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Robert Motherwell—One of the few survivors from among the original Abstract Expressionists, Motherwell is still painting within the narrow range of imagery that brought him fame. By now the works look like tired versions of the same old thing, in black and yellow. Through May 25. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Odd Nerdrum—Lush yet rigid new drawings in charcoal on lamb's-wool paper. As in the artist's paintings, Norse folkloric figures are realized in a dramatically intense neoclassical style that recalls David and Ingres. Through June 9. (Hamilton, 19 E. 71st St.)

Arturo Rodriguez—Crowded narrative paintings, with a Cuban flair, in a tortured social-realist idiom, and a more personal series of glib self-portraits, which have temptresses posing on the artist's nose, roller-skating across his cheeks, or doing acrobatics on his forehead. Through May 30. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

Paul Rotterdam—In the seventies, this artist made masterly post-minimalist drawings in deeply rubbed graphite. Most of his new graphite works, on view here, are abstractions from nature, and his characteristic intensity is now diffused over large areas of white paper. Through June 10. (Cadé, 1045 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

C. C. Wang—Chinese landscape scrolls, in the traditional style but with an awareness of Post-Impressionist painting, displayed along with antique brush pots, brush washers, armrests, bronze weights, and other scholar's implements. Through May 27. (China Institute, 125 E. 65th St. Open Mondays.)

Group Shows—At **LAFAYETTE PARKE**, 58 E. 79th St.: This hodgepodge of still-lifes includes work ranging from Martin Johnson Heade's simple floral arrangement in a champagne glass to an odd pre-Pop abstraction in Sumi ink by Jim Dine. The show is worthwhile for its hidden marvels, like Jean Metzinger's Cubist oil and Gabriele Münter's two Expressionist paintings. Through June 24. . . . **MATHES,** 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.: Included in "Bohemian Night Life: 1910-1935" are an early Stuart Davis painting of a buxom dance-hall singer depicted in Ashcan style; a racist drawing of black tap dancers by Miguel Covarrubias, the Mexican illustrator for *Vanity Fair;* and a fine Reginald Marsh watercolor of some hip-shaking women, which drips with sex. Through June 1. . . . **PERLS,** 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.: A delightful Miró painted on burlap in the artist's characteristic figurative shorthand, a sturdy analytic-Cubist Braque of 1913, an airy Matisse of a woman in her boudoir, and other exquisitely selected masterworks of the early Parisian modernists. They renew even a hardened skeptic's faith in the magic of painting. Through June 30. . . . **VANDERWOUDE TANANBAUM,** 24 E. 81st St.: "Abstract Expressions" is a fine display of a few sculptures and a dozen abstract paintings made primarily in New York in the fifties and early sixties by accomplished artists, mostly of the second tier. Alfred Leslie's, Conrad Marca-Relli's, and Theodoros Stamos's paintings bear witness to the winding down of expressionistic abstraction. Through May 31.

Short List—**GIORGIO CAVALLON,** McCoy, 19 E. 71st St. (through June 1); **NICK GHIZ,** Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. (through June 3); **DIMITRI HADZI,** Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St. (through June 3); **HENRY MOORE,** Weintraub, 988 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (through May 27).

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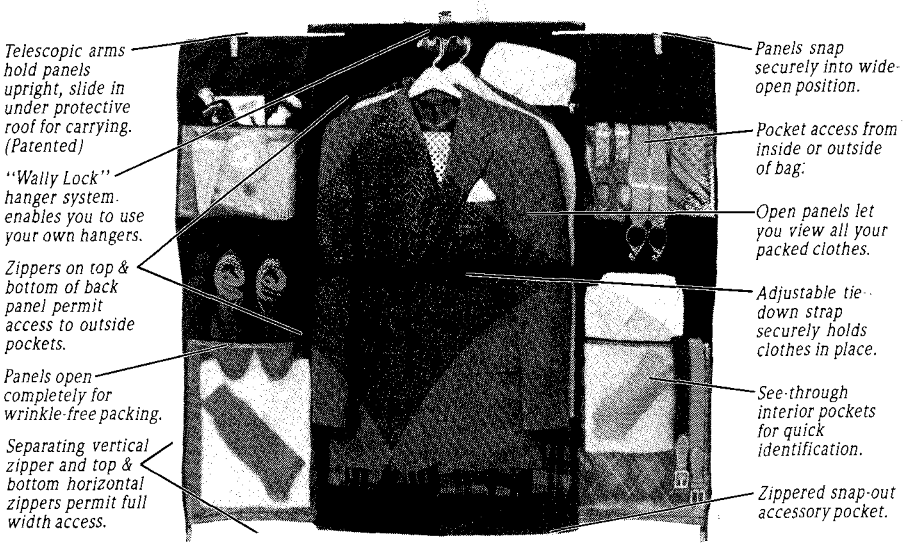
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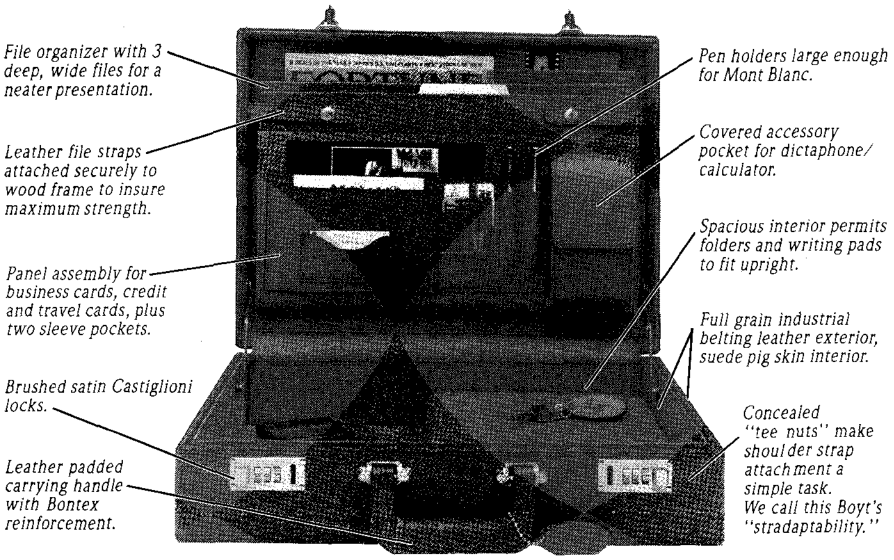
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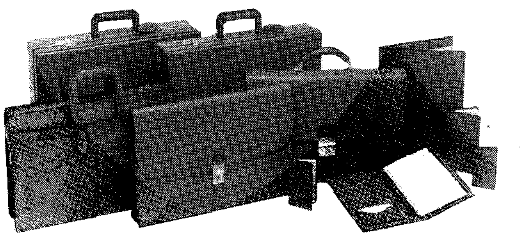

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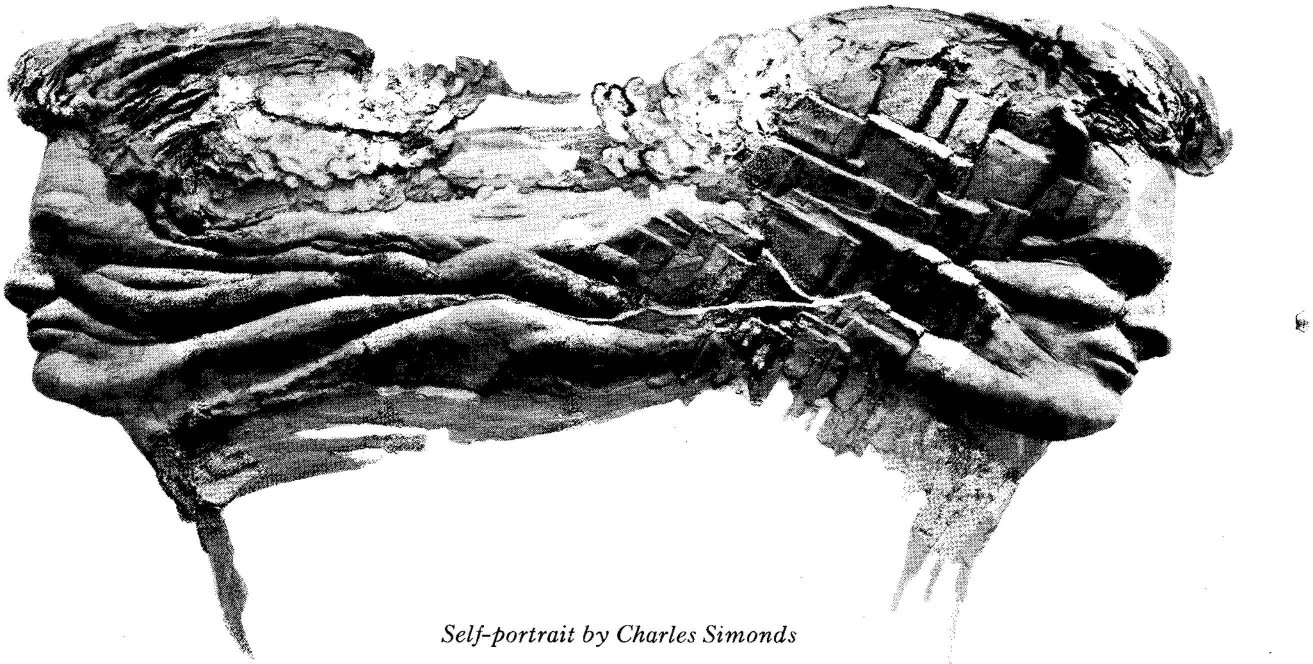


Self-portrait by Charles Simonds

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Norman Bluhm—Happy powder-puff paintings of billowy post-Matissean forms, in high-fashion purples, pinks, lavenders, oranges, yellows, and flesh tones. Through May 20. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

Alice Dalton Brown / Barbara Dixon Drewa—Well-rendered Precisionist paintings of the glittery early-morning sun as it illuminates lush tropical plants, viewed from Key West porches or from the sides of houses. / Common trompe-l'oeil paintings of type trays and bulletin boards displaying chess pieces, ribbons, dice, and matchbooks and playing cards printed with masterpieces and with images of Wonder Woman. Through May 20. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

Alexander Calder (1898-1976)—Calder's signature metal sculptures and generally cheerful flying shapes have survived their well-known official uses, and, coming on the heels of similar work by Neo-Geo artists and a revived interest in biomorphic abstraction, they look refreshed. Through June 17. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

John DeAndrea—Three new emotionally direct Photo-Realist figurative sculptures by the pensive person's Duane Hanson. In one, the artist stares forlornly at a plaster mask while a female model looks over his shoulder, in a composition borrowed from Courbet. It suggests contemporary art's predatory nature toward history. Through May 26. (Lamagna, 50 W. 57th St.)

David Deutsch—Landscape paintings in Flashe and gouache, or oil, on paper, canvas, or aluminum, whose arcadian vistas are simultaneously expansive and claustrophobic. Through May 27. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Jean Dubuffet (1901-85)—Paintings and works on paper from 1955 to 1962 (called "assemblages," "texturologies," and "matériologies") that look like closeups of soil. With these sere and gritty surfaces, Dubuffet seems to anticipate work by artists as disparate as Milton Resnick and Anselm Kiefer. Through July 8. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St.)

Friedel Dzubas—Thirty-six small abstract studies on unstretched canvas, in box frames. Dzubas's modest daubs of color create great radiance and some amazingly specific dramatic effects. This show is intensely pleasurable. Through May 20. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Lucio Fontana (1899-1968)—While Jackson Pollock was busy liberating paint over here, Fontana was in Italy slashing his monochrome canvases. The results were often surprisingly poetic (and about as accidental as Arp's "chance" compositions), and here are some prime examples, gathered under the auspices of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, of Venice. Through June 16. (Rayburn Foundation, 41 E. 57th St.)

Paul Hunter—Small, vaporous encaustics—moodscape paintings, depicting what could be storm-tossed waters or ominously cloudy skies. Also, detailed bronzes of underwater vegetation, which are just stuff. Through May 20. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Ron Janowich—A dynamic show of tondo paintings. A vertical bar is cut from the center of each, dropped down a foot or so, and usually painted to contrast with the two halves above it. The paintings are finished with luscious Old Master glazes, somewhat reminiscent of the late-seventies work of Pat Steir. Through June 2. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Gustav Klimt (1862-1918)—A lot of pale pencil drawings; a few major paintings, including several pointillistic park scenes; and some fascinating extras, like Klimt's caftan. Through June 10. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Alice Neel (1900-84) and **Diane Arbus** (1923-71)—There's no sugar and not everything's nice in Neel's paintings and in Arbus's photographs of children, but spice there is, and even spite. This very strong show is as much a portrait of Neel and Arbus as it is of children. Through May 20. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Francis Picabia (1879-1953)—A fantastic and utterly disingenuous show of paintings from the twenties and early thirties: the long-spurned and now famous "Transparences." The filmy layers of superimposed imagery in these works—as well as the images themselves—may be the most widely and successfully imitated compositional device in art of the past decade. Seductive, sophisticated, sentimental, deranged—these paintings are altogether transcendent. Through June 3. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

James Romberger / Wayne Toepp—Skillful and conventional social-realist pastels of New York's homeless and its derelict buildings, and chaotic scenes of crowds and ghetto life, with a lively distribution of color reminiscent of Red Grooms. / Impressionistic painted études of smudged, exploding puffs of light à la Turner and Whistler. Through May 31. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Carl Nicholas Titolo—"Jazzbop: Visual Jazz" is one of those shows (Titolo's sixth here) full of all sorts of wonderful, ebullient, life-affirming artifacts that say only that the artist is one helluva creative, busy-busy guy. Through May 20. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

John Torreano—Galactic storm paintings with wooden balls embedded in grainy plywood surfaces, often left raw, by a solid abstract painter in the all-over tradition of Pollock. (Shea & Beker, 20 W. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Large, painted, shaped-wood jewels, displayed on a shelf and on the wall. Both through June 3. (Hanson, 415 West Broadway.)

Short List—**ROMARE BEARDEN,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through June 10); **COLLEEN BROWNING,** Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St. (through May 20); **PAOLO ICARO,** Tilton, 24 W. 57th St. (through June 3); **WIN KNOWLTON,** Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (through May 27); **MARISOL,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St., open Mondays (through June 3); **IZHAR PATKIN,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St., open Mondays (through June 3); **PICASSO,** Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. (through June 30); **PETER SAUL,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through May 30).

GALLERIES—SoHo

John M. Armleder—Elegant new design-savvy objects by a popular Swiss artist, including four meticulous piles of folded wool blankets under two tacky chandeliers; three trombones of different metals on a well-padded high-style chaise; and some "paintings" (shiny fake-snakeskin fabrics on stretchers). Through June 3. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

Scott Burton—Burton's furniture sculptures may be among the most decadent objects being made today, but they surpass most geometric post-minimalist sculpture in beauty and presence and in the questions they raise about function. His new chunky sandstone table and chairs are a lesson in architecture. Through June 10. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

Saint Clair Cemin—In one of these sculptures, a bronze biomorphic form, its feet attached to thin white metal sheets, floats in the air—a somewhat magical, thought-provoking work, in which the support and the supported become fused. Many of the other works are little more than highly aestheticized, glib pedestal sculptures. Through May 20. (Audiello, 142 Greene St.)

Heide Fasnacht—Large painted sculptures in globular shapes, made of laminated wood layers whose edges have been left unrounded. The works have a gyrating dynamism that captures the eye without holding the mind. Through June 6. (Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway.)

Peter Fischli and David Weiss—This deadpan comedy team from Switzerland made their international mark a couple of years ago with a brilliantly realized half-hour movie that had no actors, a Rube Goldberg plot, action à la Buster Keaton, and special effects out of Wagner via Hans-Jürgen Syberberg. The theme of this show is travel, and it includes medium-sized featureless plaster statues of prototypical stewardesses and cars, along with large Cibachrome clichés of airports, the Matterhorn, and the swans of the Limmat River, in the artists' native Zurich. Through May 20. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Viola Frey—A garish, arguably hilarious show of enormous painted ceramic figures—easily twice life-size—and some drawings. The

Gargantuas sit, lounge, or hang around in groups, as if they were at a nudists' picnic. Through May 31. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Antony Gormley—A sculptural installation of life-size cast-iron wrestlers and a crowd of miniature terra-cotta figures arranged in a huge sunburst. In the psychological containment this British sculptor portrays, he invites comparison to Giacometti. Through May 31. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

Inigo Jones (1573-1652)—An impeccable scholarly display of lovely ink drawings by the great Palladio-influenced Elizabethan architect. Through July 22. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

Mel Kendrick / Bruce Boice—Lively new wood sculptures, mostly from tree trunks that have been sliced, sawed, mangled, axed, jigged, and jagged—bark and all—and a huge sculpture whose carved circles and stripes have been touched with black. / Post-Cubist abstract paintings with chairs in them. Through May 20. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Kevin Larmon—Spare, flattened still-life elements (most commonly a pear and an apple in a bowl) in scratched, clotted paint atop heavily obscured magazine pictures. The work is more appealing for its reticence than for its revelations. Through May 27. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Erik Levine—Large plywood sculptures that look like huge gyroscopes or stylized cubic snowflakes, partially covered in wood putty and streaked with glue. They link up to the American tradition of organic abstraction, and, though somewhat academic, are a physical tour de force. Through June 3. (Brown, 560 Broadway.)

Gerhard Merz—This installation, composed of a brass plaque, a suite of six paintings that consist mostly of frames, a granite-and-brass sculpture, and a single larger frame painting, is titled "Construire MCMLXXXIX" ("To Build 1989") and is intended as an homage to Mies van der Rohe. Merz's work is often handsome and often quite vapid. Through May 27. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Peter Nadin—In his best show yet, Nadin merges an enjoyment of painting with a suspicion of its illusionism in these views of the artist's studio, with its window open and art works scattered about. Nadin plays with the theme of creative frustration as strategically as if it were a good chess match. Through May 20. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Manuel Neri—Sculptures and works on paper. This artist's more or less life-size figures (some in marble, others out of plaster) are masterly and upsetting. It is as if their "flesh," suggested by the marble tints or by the pastel pigments, were eroding while the figures still seemed young—as if the life the works signify were nasty and eternal. Through May 27. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Eric Orr—Two mesmerizing columns with water cascading down them, by a California artist not well known in New York. In one work, light flickers over the water as it brushes past horizontal ridges of bronze. In the other, water pours down in clusters, like liquid mercury. There are also monochrome paintings of intense colored light, like neon Rothkos. Through June 3. (Hanson, 415 West Broadway.)

Gary Panter—Big, colorful paintings by the man who is largely responsible for the set of "Pee-wee's Playhouse." Panter has graduated to paintings of sinister cartoon visions—one-eyed monsters and unshaven bad boys—which look all too familiar. Through May 27. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, in a new location, at 532 Broadway.)

Hirsch Perlman and **Charles Ray**—Two artists who are in the Whitney Biennial. More of Perlman's truncated art works: photographs of Polaroid photographs of great modernist architectural works, this time the Johnson Wax Company Building, by Frank Lloyd Wright, and Adolf Loos's Rufer's House. . . . ¶ At first, Ray's sculpture looks like a blank arrangement of utilitarian objects on a table —a plate, a cup, a pepper mill, a potted plant (fake)—but the hum of little motors tips you off: each of the objects is ever so slowly doing its own mechanical pirouette. Through May 27. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

Ellen Phelan—New paintings of dreamily rendered verdure, in various green and nongreen monochromes. All of these works refer to Romantic landscape painting and to the irrevocable intrusion of photography and contemporary edginess on that vision. Many of the paintings are amplified adaptations of the artist's better-known drawings; they do not suffer in translation. Through May 26. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Tim Rollins + K.O.S.—Rollins and his kid collaborators once again perform their tasteful, graphic alterations, this time on collaged comic-book pages, and on the pages of Kafka's "Metamorphosis" and Schubert's "Winterreise." With the exception of a big caricature of P. W. Botha—a frequent but still potent subject for this group—the show looks a bit formulaic. Through June 3. (Gorney, 100 Greene St.)

Ed Ruscha / Charles Simonds—New grisaille paintings by a recent candidate for rediscovery overexposure; they have a mysterious, penetrating poetry. As Ruscha's comic impulses fade further into the background, his Hopper side slips through. / These recent clay sculptures of miniature archeological sites for Simonds' imaginary Little People are emotionally complex. In one of them, an earthen landmass reaches out like a hand from its perch of stratified clay, its vertical "fingers" hinting of buildings about to take shape. Through May 27. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Hunt Slonem—Brushy birds painted against geometric backgrounds with grids of bars streaked over them—something about paint and encagement. Through May 20. (Allen, 560 Broadway.)

Bill Sullivan—Realistic landscapes and cityscapes with a refreshing informality. The most compelling depict synthetic sunsets in cotton-candy colors that stir the memory. Through May 20. (Einstein, 591 Broadway.)

Donald Sultan—Crayon drawings—some dense and scumbly, others faint—by a prolific maker of overly elegant paintings and prints. These are poker hands, few of which—say, the one showing a pair of nines—are likely to win any jackpots. Through June 3. (Kasmin, 580 Broadway.)

Philip Taaffe—These very beautiful, knowingly decorative new abstract works are the result of a complex process of drawing, painting, printing, and collage. Taaffe is clearly taken with his new circumstances—he now lives in a big decaying villa on the Bay of Naples—and has adopted a number of classical and Islamic patterned motifs. Through May 27. (Boone, 417 West Broadway, and Hearn, 39 Wooster St.)

Group Shows—At **lorence-monk**, 568 Broadway: These paintings, through closeup and enlargement, propose a new direction for abstraction. The show also proposes Julian Lethbridge—whose grisaille paintings resemble reptile-skin patterns and are very assured—as an heir apparent to Jasper Johns. One small, elegant painting near the entrance, tighter and tougher than the rest, might fit that designation. Through May 26. . . . **shafrazi**, 163 Mercer St.: Exquisite minimal sculptures, including a mirror and rock and soil displacement piece by Smithson, a skyscraper of stacked open cubes by LeWitt, a beguiling Plexiglas-and-glass box by Bell, and, in one corner, a magical fluorescent-light work by Flavin. Through May 27.

Short List—**herman cherry**, Shapolsky, 99 Spring St. (through June 10); **nancy chunn**, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through June 3); **lothar fischer**, Haller, 415 West Broadway (through May 31); **david hammons**, Exit Art, 578 Broadway (through June 10); **james hennessey**, Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through June 3); **mimmo paladino**, Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (through June 3); **joel shapiro**, Cooper, 155 Wooster St. (through June 3); **merrill wagner**, Fawbush, 568 Broadway (through June 10); **tom wesselmann**, Davidson, 415 West Broadway (through June 10); **joseph zito**, Esman, 70 Greene St. (through June 10).

OTHER GALLERIES

David Bowes—Recent paintings. Familiar icons of stately décor or theatrical artifice—Chinese Export teapots, eighteenth-century German figurines, pharaonic monuments, a clown—clash with disjunctive, stylized backgrounds. These works are daring, skillful, and bilious. Through May 20. (Baghoomian, 611 Broadway.)

Christian Marclay—Everything in this mixed-media show has a whimsical but literal connection to sound. Through May 27. (Cugliani, 508 Greenwich St., at Spring St.)

Sylvia Martins / Vittorio Scarpati—Recent abstract paintings, in tan, buff, and burgundy tones, that are technically accomplished but academic and stiff; also, a couple of much better, jazzier, glittery sand drawings. / Scarpati's first solo exhibition consists of scores of small Rabelaisian notebook drawings, in a speedy, cartoonlike style. Through May 27. (56 Bleecker Street Gallery.)

Robin Winters—Eleven small, finely crafted tables, each with a molded glass vase on top and engaging figurative drawings in its drawer. The artists will add to the drawers' contents each year for eleven years. Through May 20. (Klein, 611 Broadway.)

P.S. I—Two major sculpture exhibitions. On the main exhibition floor is "The Drowned World," a suite of ten scherzi on the theme of the fountain. . . . ¶ One floor up is a roomy, relaxed retrospective of work made since 1977 by Franz West, a liberated, puckish Austrian sculptor. Through June 11. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Emmet Gowin's show is a feat. It makes photography appear wondrous—like that moment when you're on a plane and have the window seat and the sun is setting, and you look down and see a river and for a minute you stop thinking what you were thinking about. The photographs are like Constable's clouds in reverse—they're aerial views of the earth. Yet they have that same combination of mystery and realism that gives you something to grab on to and that sets your imagination free. They took a lot of work—judging by the perfectionism in the toning and the printing—but they appear unfussy, and give the earth all the credit for their beauty.

Dike Blair—Large, grainy color photographs of an industrial plant or a suburban street viewed through a car windshield, with occasional references to the artmaking process—a few drips of paint, some painted circles of light. Most of the scenes are dusky, spotlit, or shrouded in a green haze. About half are the shape of a full-length mirror and suggest self-portraiture. An uninspired and uninspiring nod to some interesting thoughts. Through May 27. (Koury Wingate, 578 Broadway.)

Louise Lawler—For over a decade, Lawler has been proving the postmodernist point that context alters meaning with her simple color photographs of art works as they have been arranged and displayed by herself, by private collectors, and by public institutions. Her newest show includes an incisive comment on contemporary art consumption: she pairs a photograph of Jeff Koons' very expensive, heavily publicized kitsch sculptures sitting in a gallery stockroom, as if awaiting shipment, with a smugly fashionable menu put together from "The Silver Palate Cookbook." Through May 27. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Joel-Peter Witkin—Evidence of photography's interrelations with other mediums is ample in Witkin's work, but his previously successful—even astonishing—combination of wit and the macabre is becoming heavy-handed. These works have less of his earlier suspense, invention, and risk, and none of that challenge to the tyranny of what's "normal." Through June 10. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

John Yang—Yang's Cirkut-camera panoramas of golf courses are so rich and the topographies so various that, despite an initial skepticism over the idea of golf-course photography as landscape art, we found it hard to stop looking. Through May 31. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

Short List—**tina barney**, Borden, 560 Broadway (through June 16); **robert capa**, Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St., closed Fridays and Saturdays (through July 5); **emmet gowin**, Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St. (through June 10); **georges hugnet**, Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St., open Mondays (through June 9); **christopher williams**, Luhring Augustine, 41 E. 57th St. (through May 26).

MUSIC

NO doubt the program has all been settled by now, but this is how the Juilliard School's May 18th concert at Alice Tully Hall was originally announced: Juilliard Orchestra, with Otto Werner-Mueller, conductor; pianist to be announced (T.B.A.); Tchaikovsky Concerto No. 1; other works T.B.A. The school didn't know what the program would be like, or who the pianist would be, but by George they knew the Tchaikovsky concerto would be the right piece, because by George that's what you play if you want to win the muscle-oriented piano competitions in which Juilliard graduates do so handsomely.

Juilliard is, of course, a wonderful school in many ways and hardly more culpable than dozens of others in this connection. And one would not want to prejudge the performance: it is always possible that T.B.A. will give the most poetic performance of the Tchaikovsky concerto since Josef Lhévinne. But a glance over the week's listings does suggest a concentration in the city's concert life of young performers storming their way (or so, based on unhappy experience, one expects) through what have, through usage, become heavy and hard-hitting concertos. On the same night as the Juilliard concert, the New Jersey Symphony will present Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto. Also that night (and on the 20th), the New York Philharmonic will present Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 1 for Piano; on the 19th and the 23rd, the same orchestra will perform Tchaikovsky's Concerto for Violin and Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto. All three programs have young or youngish soloists. Though we love Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky, we are perhaps unfairly inclined to stay away. The 92nd Street Y Chorale program on the 23rd, a lovely mixed bag that reminds us of Spring Concert time in a school chorus, tempts more.

"Atys"

OPERA

"ATYS"—The Paris Opera's production of Jean-Baptiste Lully's work, conducted by William Christie. With Les Arts Florissants and Ris et Danceries. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. May 17 at 6, May 19-20 at 8, and May 21 at 2.)

OPERA ENSEMBLE OF NEW YORK—In a staged version of the 1963 Broadway show "She Loves Me," conducted by Jonathan Tunick. (Lillie Blake School Theatre, 45 E. 81st St. May 17 and May 19 at 8, and May 21 at 3. For information about tickets, call 288-1485.)

BRONX OPERA COMPANY—Presenting staged performances of Rossini's "Cinderella," in English. Michael Spierman conducts. (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. May 19-20 at 8. For information about tickets, call 787-1356.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

(The box-office number for Carnegie Hall is 247-7800, and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Zubin Mehta conducting. May 18 and May 20 at 8: A Barber-Rachmaninoff-Bartók program. With Paul Tobias, cello; Peter Orth, piano; and Kyoko Takezawa, violin. . . . ¶ May 19 at 8 and May 23 at 7:30: A Dvořák-Tchaikovsky-Rachmaninoff program. With Stephanie Chase, violin, and Ju Hee Suh, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.)

"THE SYMPHONY OF THE UNIVERSE"—A work by Wendy Chambers featuring timpani, whale songs (on tape), chorus, bass drums, and other noisemakers. The composer will conduct the varied ensemble. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. May 19 at 8.)

NEW YORK POPS—Skitch Henderson conducting a birthday party for the Pops. Donald Trump will let go of his mobile phone long enough to guest-conduct a piece or two. (Carnegie Hall. May 22 at 8.)

BRONX ARTS ENSEMBLE ORCHESTRA—Guillermo Figueroa conducting and playing the violin. Three other members of the Figueroa family—a pianist, another violinist, and a cellist—will also be featured. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. May 17 at 8.)

CHORAL SYMPHONY SOCIETY—In a concert version of Handel's "Semele"; David Labovitz, conductor. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 15 at 8.)

DESSOFF CHOIRS—Amy Kaiser directing a performance of Handel's "Israel in Egypt." With Beverly Myers, soprano; Johnson Flucker, countertenor; Jeffrey Thomas, tenor; Paul Rowe, baritone; the Levin Baroque Ensemble; and others. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. May 19 at 8.)

COLLEGIATE CHORALE—Robert Bass directing Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis," with Hei-Kyung Hong, soprano; Kimball Wheeler, mezzo-soprano; Glenn Siebert, tenor; and Arthur Woodley, bass. (Carnegie Hall. May 20 at 8.)

NEW YORK CHORAL SOCIETY—John Daly Goodwin directing works by Poulenc and Berlioz, and an arrangement by Berlioz of "La Marseillaise." With the American Boychoir and vocal soloists. (Carnegie Hall. May 21 at 3.)

Y CHORALE—Amy Kaiser director, with Elizabeth Rodgers, piano. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. May 23 at 8.)

NEW AMSTERDAM SINGERS—Clara Longstreth directing. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 24 at 8.)

RECITALS

MANHATTAN MARIMBA QUARTET—With Dave Samuels, vibraphone. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. May 17 at 8.)

CHAMBER PLAYERS OF THE LEAGUE/ISCM—Performing chamber music by Andrew Imbrie, Aaron Jay Kernis, Kathryn Alexander, Morris Rosenzweig, and Niel Sir. Mr. Rosenzweig will conduct. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. May 17 at 8.)

AURORA—An early-music ensemble. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. May 17 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

NINA BEILINA—Violin, with assisting artists. (Metropolitan Synagogue, 40 E. 35th St. May 18 and May 25 at 7:30. Admission by contribution.)

TOKYO STRING QUARTET—At the Metropolitan Museum. May 18: Schubert quartets in D Major, C Major, and D Minor. . . . ¶ May 25: Schubert quartets in C Minor, C Major, and G Major. (Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Evenings at 8.)

PARNASSUS—Performing works by David Rakowski, Arnold Schoenberg—with Jan Opalach, bass—and Tristan Keuris. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. May 18 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

NADJA SALERNO-SONNENBERG—Violin. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. May 20 at 8.)

FLUTE FORCE—Four flutists, with guest artist Julius Baker, also a flutist. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. May 21 at 3. Admission by contribution.)

POMERIUM MUSICES—A thirteen-voice ensemble performing works from the sixteenth century. Presented by Music Before 1800. (Corpus Christi Church, W. 121st St., just east of Broadway. May 21 at 5:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

WESTERN WIND—A vocal ensemble, in a program of twentieth-century works. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 21 at 8.)

QUINTET OF THE AMERICAS—Performing premières by Elliott Sharp and Mel Graves, as well as works by Morton Feldman, John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, and Morton Subotnick. (Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. May 22 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

CHAMBER SOUND—Chamber works by Charles Loeffler, Poulenc, Max Reger, and Fauré. (Weill Recital Hall. May 23 at 8.)

MUSIC BY TERRY JENNINGS—A memorial concert, with live and taped segments. Jennings' long-time collaborator La Monte Young will sing. (Dia Art Foundation, 548 W. 22nd St. May 23 at 8. For reservations, call 925-8270.)

JAZZ / ROCK / POP / PERSONAL APPEARANCES

LOVE AND MONEY—This band from Scotland cuts a deep groove of rich, blue-eyed soul with their sophisticated guitar-and-keyboard sound. Their latest album, "Strange Kind of Love" (smoothly produced by Gary Katz, of Steely Dan fame), is a mixed offering: the music may not be startlingly new, but it is melodic and well crafted. (Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. 473-7171. May 18 at 8.)

SONNY ROLLINS—This figure from the jazz pantheon, whose onetime practice of blowing his sax on the Williamsburg Bridge has been borrowed by many a film director, has stayed a leader on the bop scene since the early fifties, when he sat in with Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, and Max Roach. Rollins has butted heads with more than a few sidemen (in the late sixties he increasingly went in for solo improvisation), but peace and love should prevail when he takes the stage with the New Orleans sax man Branford Marsalis. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 19 at 8.)

HANK WILLIAMS, JR.—Born Randall Hank Williams, Jr., in 1949, the son of the most influential C. & W. musician may not be "moanin' the blues" like his father, but he's become quite a country rocker in his own right. At sixteen, he had a No. 1 country hit and toured with a band called the Cheatin' Hearts. In the mid-seventies, he stopped living off his father's legacy and began recording with "outlaws" like Waylon Jennings. Doubtless he'll be singin' and pickin' a few of his dad's classic tunes, but now, with such songs as "All My Rowdy Friends (Have Settled Down)," he has some of his own, too. (Byrne Meadowlands Arena.1-201 935-3900. May 20 at 8.)

BARRY MANILOW—Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. 586-6510. Through June 3.

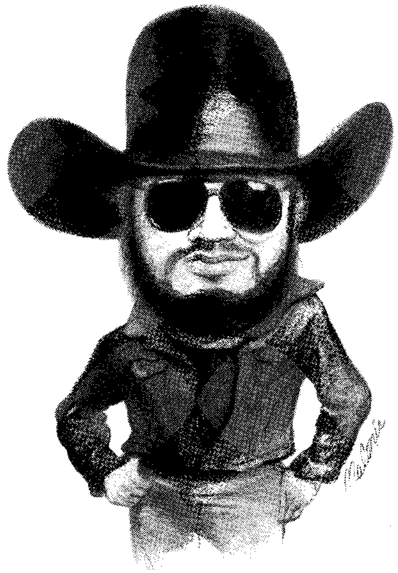
BILLY CONNOLLY—Carnegie Hall. May 17 at 8.

ZEENA PARKINS—Roulette, 228 West Broadway. May 18-20 at 9. For information about tickets, call 219-8242.

TITO PUENTE—With Ray Barretto and Paquito d'Rivera. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. May 20 at 8.)

DICK CLARK'S AMERICAN BANDSTAND CONCERT TOUR—With the Spinners, the Association, the Guess Who, and the Drifters. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. May 23 at 8.)

TOWN HALL—May 18 at 8: Israeli folk music. . . . ¶ May 19 at 8:30: Barbara Moore and Adam Makowicz. . . . ¶ May 20 at 7: Fina, Thuli Dumakude, Thokoza, and Bayeza. . . . ¶ May 21 at 7:30: Suzanne Vega and Philip Glass in a benefit for the Martha Graham Dance Company. (123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.)



Hank Williams, Jr.

Rain Forest Preservation Benefit—Co-hosted by Madonna and Kenny Scharf. Performers include Sandra Bernhard, the Del Fuegos, Ann Magnuson, and Maria McKee. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. May 24 at 8. For tickets, call 307-7171.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the Los Angeles Dodgers, May 15-17 at 7:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the San Francisco Giants, May 19 at 7:35, May 20 at 3:20, and May 21 at 1:35.
Yankees—Vs. the California Angels, May 23-25 at 7:30.
(Home base for the Mets is Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; and for the Yankees, Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1 . . . ¶ Trotting at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

CHAMPIONSHIPS—BASKETBALL

N.B.A. Playoffs—Michael Jordan plays the Knicks on May 16 and—if the series goes seven games—on May 19 and 21. His Chicago teammate, Bill Cartwright, says, "Michael can take over a game at any time." We're hoping he won't be able to find the time.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Historic Houses—It's National Historic Preservation Week, and the Parks and Recreation Department is holding a festival to celebrate their historic houses. There are fifteen of them (dating from as far back as the seventeenth century) in New York parks, and until May 21 each will be the site of special happenings. At the Lefferts Homestead, in Brooklyn, for instance, there will be an afternoon of folk ballads on May 20. On May 20 and 21, Alice Austen House, in Queens, will be the site of an antiques fair. For more information, call 397-3111.
New York Secretary Show—A hundred secretary-related exhibits, the usual seminars—"Stress and Goal Management," "Beauty Is Skin Deep"—and a few novelties. The latter include hourly secretarial "Olympics," and visits from Carly Simon—who wrote the theme to "Working Girl"—and from secretaries of the rich and famous. (Madison Square Garden Exposition Rotunda, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. May 16-17 from 11 to 8, and May 18 from 11 to 6. No tickets necessary.)
Readings—Nadine Gordimer reads from her fiction. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. May 22 at 8.) . . . ¶ Claire Bloom, Jane Curtin, and Michael Mitchell read from the stories of Emma Tennant, John A. Williams, and Gail Godwin. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. May 24 at 6:30.)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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21	22	23	24			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 22.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

May 16-18: At 6, "Pineapple" (1983, directed by Amos Gitai), a documentary; at 8, "House" (1980, Gitai) and "Wadi" (1981, Gitai), both documentaries; and, at 10, "King Lear" (Jean-Luc Godard).

May 19: At 6, "Bangkok Bahrain" (1984, Gitai), a documentary; at 8, "Esther" (1986, Gitai), a documentary; and, at 10, "King Lear."

May 20-21: At 4, "King Lear"; at 6, "Bangkok Bahrain"; at 8, "Esther"; and, at 10, "King Lear."

May 23: At 6, "Brand New Day" (1987, Gitai), a documentary; at 8, "Field Diary" (1982, Gitai) and "In Search of Identity" (1980, Gitai), both documentaries; and, at 10, "King Lear."

May 24: At 6, "House" and "Wadi"; at 8, "Pineapples"; and, at 10, "King Lear."

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: "Say Anything" (†).

Theatre 2: "See No Evil, Hear No Evil" (Arthur Hiller), with Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor.

Theatre 3: "Miss Firecracker" (Thomas Schlamme), with Holly Hunter, Mary Steenburgen, Tim Robbins, Alfre Woodard, and Scott Glenn.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"Scandal" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Field of Dreams" (†).

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

"Earth Girls Are Easy" (Julien Temple), with Geena Davis.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Pet Sematary" (Mary Lambert).

Theatre 2: Through May 23: "Heathers" (†). From May 24: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (Steven Spielberg), with Harrison Ford and Sean Connery.

Theatre 3: Through May 18: "Major League" (David S. Ward), with Tom Berenger, Charlie Sheen, and Corbin Bernsen. From May 19: "Road House" (Rowdy Herrington), with Patrick Swayze, Ben Gazzara, and Sam Elliott.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

Through May 18: "K-9" (Rod Daniel), with James Belushi and Mel Harris.

From May 19 (tentative): "How I Got Into College" (Savage Steve Holland), with Anthony Edwards and Corey Parker.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"Miss Firecracker" (Thomas Schlamme), with Holly Hunter, Mary Steenburgen, Tim Robbins, Alfre Woodard, and Scott Glenn.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

"Criminal Law" (Martin Campbell), with Gary Oldman and Kevin Bacon.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"Say Anything" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "K-9" (Rod Daniel), with James Belushi and Mel Harris.

Theatre 2: Through May 18: "Getting It Right" (Randal Kleiser), with Jesse Birdsall. From May 19: "Miracle Mile" (Steve DeJarnatt), with Anthony Edwards and Mare Winningham.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Field of Dreams" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "Scandal" (†).

Theatre 2: "How to Get Ahead in Advertising" (Bruce Robinson), with Richard E. Grant and Rachel Ward.

Theatre 3: Through May 18: "New York Stories" (†). From May 19: "For Queen & Country" (Martin Stellman), with Denzel Washington.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "See No Evil, Hear No Evil" (Arthur Hiller), with Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor.

Theatre 2: Through May 23: "Earth Girls Are Easy" (Julien Temple), with Geena Davis. From May 24: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (Steven Spielberg), with Harrison Ford and Sean Connery.

Denzel Washington in "For Queen & Country"

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

Through May 18: "Listen to Me" (Douglas Day Stewart), with Kirk Cameron, Jami Gertz, and Roy Scheider.

From May 19 (tentative): "How I Got Into College" (Savage Steve Holland), with Anthony Edwards and Corey Parker.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "Rain Man" (†).

Theatre 2: Through May 18: "Major League" (David S. Ward), with Tom Berenger, Charlie Sheen, and Corbin Bernsen. From May 19: "Road House" (Rowdy Herrington), with Patrick Swayze, Ben Gazzara, and Sam Elliott.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

Through May 18: "La Lectrice" (†).

From May 19: "Cold Feet" (Robert Dornhelm), with Keith Carradine, Sally Kirkland, and Tom Waits.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Lost Angels" (Hugh Hudson), with Donald Sutherland and Adam Horovitz.

U.A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

Through May 18: "K-9" (Rod Daniel), with James Belushi and Mel Harris.

From May 19: "Road House" (Rowdy Herrington), with Patrick Swayze, Ben Gazzara, and Sam Elliott.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)

Theatre 1: "Pet Sematary" (Mary Lambert).

Theatre 2: Through May 23: "See No Evil, Hear No Evil" (Arthur Hiller), with Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor. From May 24: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (Steven Spielberg), with Harrison Ford and Sean Connery.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "Earth Girls Are Easy" (Julien Temple), with Geena Davis.

Theatre 2: "Criminal Law" (Martin Campbell), with Gary Oldman and Kevin Bacon.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)

Through May 16: "Jan Švankmajer: Alchemist of the Surreal" (†).

From May 17: "The Suitors" (directed by Ghasem Ebrahimian; in English and Farsi).

Bleecker Street Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

Theatre 1: Through May 18: "Rain Man" (†). From May 19: "A Night in Havana: Dizzy Gillespie in Cuba" (John Holland), a documentary.

Theatre 2: "Voices from the Attic" (Debbie Goodstein), a documentary.

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (†).

Theatre 2: "K-9" (Rod Daniel), with James Belushi and Mel Harris.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

"Earth Girls Are Easy" (Julien Temple), with Geena Davis.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "Field of Dreams" (†).

Theatre 2: Through May 18: "Listen to Me" (Douglas Day Stewart), with Kirk Cameron, Jami Gertz, and Roy Scheider. From May 19: "How I Got Into College" (Savage Steve Holland), with Anthony Edwards and Corey Parker.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "Let's Get Lost" (†).

Theatre 2: "Wonderland" (Philip Saville).

Theatre 3: Through May 18: "Stealing Heaven" (Clive Donner), with Denholm Elliott, Derek de Lint, and Kim Thomson. From May 19: "La Lectrice" (†).

Theatre 4: "Brightness" (1987, Souleymane Cissé; a Malian film, in Bambara).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: Through May 18: "Getting It Right" (Randal Kleiser), with Jesse Birdsall. From May 19: "Miracle Mile" (Steve DeJarnatt), with Anthony Edwards and Mare Winningham.

Theatre 2: "Criminal Law" (Martin Campbell), with Gary Oldman and Kevin Bacon.

Theatre 3: "The Return of Swamp Thing" (Jim Wynorski), with Louis Jourdan and Heather Locklear.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"New York Stories" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"Lawrence of Arabia" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

Through May 18: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

From May 19: To be announced.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

Through May 18: "Getting It Right" (Randal Kleiser), with Jesse Birdsall.

From May 19: To be announced.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Field of Dreams" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

"Let's Get Lost" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)

"The Rainbow" (Ken Russell), with Sammi Davis.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Working Girl" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

Through May 18: "Lost Angels" (Hugh Hudson), with Donald Sutherland and Adam Horovitz.

From May 19: "Road House" (Rowdy Herrington), with Patrick Swayze, Ben Gazzara, and Sam Elliott.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "Little Vera" (Vasily Pichul; in Russian), with Natalya Negoda.

Theatre 2: "High Hopes" (†).

Theatre 3: "Murmur of the Heart" (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)

Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).
Theatre 2: "Chocolat" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Field of Dreams" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through May 23: "See No Evil, Hear No Evil" (Arthur Hiller), with Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor. From May 24: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (Steven Spielberg), with Harrison Ford and Sean Connery.
Theatre 2: "Miss Firecracker" (Thomas Schlamme), with Holly Hunter, Mary Steenburgen, Tim Robbins, Alfre Woodard, and Scott Glenn.
Theatre 3: "Scandal" (†).
Theatre 4: Through May 18: "Major League" (David S. Ward), with Tom Berenger, Charlie Sheen, and Corbin Bernsen. From May 19: "For Queen & Country" (Martin Stellman), with Denzel Washington.
Theatre 5: "Pet Sematary" (Mary Lambert).
Theatre 6: "Earth Girls Are Easy" (Julien Temple), with Geena Davis.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through May 18: "Criminal Law" (Martin Campbell), with Gary Oldman and Kevin Bacon. From May 19: "Miracle Mile" (Steven DeJarnatt), with Anthony Edwards and Mare Winningham.
Theatre 2: "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "The Return of Swamp Thing" (Jim Wynorski), with Louis Jourdan and Heather Locklear.
Theatre 2: "K-9" (Rod Daniel), with James Belushi and Mel Harris.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Terror Within."
Theatre 2: Through May 18: "Red Scorpion" (directed by Joe Zito), with Dolph Lundgren. From May 19: "How I Got Into College" (Savage Steve Holland), with Anthony Edwards and Corey Parker.
Theatre 3: "Earth Girls Are Easy" (Julien Temple), with Geena Davis.
Theatre 4: "See No Evil, Hear No Evil" (Arthur Hiller), with Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor.
Theatre 5: "Fistfighter" (Frank Zuñiga).
Theatre 6: Through May 18: "Cyborg" (Albert Pyun), with Jean-Claude Van Damme. From May 19: "Miracle Mile" (Steve DeJarnatt), with Anthony Edwards and Mare Winningham.

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"The Horror Show" (James Isaac), with Lance Henriksen, Brion James, and Rita Taggart.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Rain Man" (†).
Theatre 3: "Heathers" (†).
Theatre 4: "Major League" (David S. Ward), with Tom Berenger, Charlie Sheen, and Corbin Bernsen.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through May 23: "Pet Sematary" (Mary Lambert).
From May 24: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (Steven Spielberg), with Harrison Ford and Sean Connery.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Scandal" (†).
Theatre 2: "K-9" (Rod Daniel), with James Belushi and Mel Harris.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"The Return of Swamp Thing" (Jim Wynorski), with Louis Jourdan and Heather Locklear.

West Side Cinema I and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Criminal Law" (Martin Campbell), with Gary Oldman and Kevin Bacon.
Theatre 2: "Teen Witch."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
May 15: "Anna Karenina" (1935, directed by Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Fredric March, and Basil Rathbone; and "Rasputin and the Empress" (1932, Richard Boleslavsky), with John, Ethel, and Lionel Barrymore.
May 16-17: "Nijinsky" (1980, Herbert Ross), with Alan Bates, Leslie Browne, and George de la Peña; and "The Music Lovers" (1971, Ken Russell), with Richard Chamberlain and Glenda Jackson.
May 18: "Prince Igor" (1972; in Russian), performed by the Kirov Opera and Ballet of Leningrad; and "Eugene Onegin" (1959; in Russian), performed by the Bolshoi Theatre group.
May 19-20: "Moscow on the Hudson" (†); and "Love and Death" (1975, Woody Allen), with Allen and Diane Keaton.
May 21: "Romeo and Juliet" (1954), with Galina Ulanova, Yuri Zhdanov, and the Bolshoi Ballet; and "Plisetskaya Dances" (†).
May 22-23: "War and Peace" (1956, King Vidor), with Audrey Hepburn, Henry Fonda, and Mel Ferrer.
May 24: "The Scarlet Empress" (1934, Josef von Sternberg), with Marlene Dietrich, Sam Jaffe, and John Lodge; and "Crime and Punishment" (1935, Josef von Sternberg), with Edward Arnold and Peter Lorre.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through May 16: "One, Two, Three" (1961, Billy Wilder), with James Cagney, Horst Buchholz, Pamela Tiffin, Arlene Francis, and Lilo Pulver; and "Kiss Me, Stupid" (1964, Wilder), with Dean Martin, Kim Novak, and Ray Walston.
May 17-18: "Dark Eyes" (1987, Nikita Mikhalkov; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni, Marthe Keller, Elena Sofonova, and Silvana Magnano; and "Gabriela" (1984, Bruno Barreto; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese), with Sonia Braga and Marcello Mastroianni.
May 19-20: "Fitzcarraldo" (1982, Werner Herzog; in German), with Klaus Kinski and Claudia Cardinale; and "The Tin Drum" (1980, Volker Schlöndorff; in German), with David Bennent.
May 21: "L'Argent" (1984, Robert Bresson; in French); and "Trial of Joan of Arc" (1962, Robert Bresson; in French), with Florence Carrez.

From the time she shot to Hollywood's front ranks with "The Man with the Golden Arm" and "Picnic" (both 1955) to her controversial appearance, in 1964, as a frowzy B-girl in Billy Wilder's "Kiss Me, Stupid," Kim Novak—who's being given a two-week salute, starting May 19th, at the American Museum of the Moving Image as the "Last of the Love Goddesses"—expressed the tension and the yearning of the beauty for whom beauty isn't enough.

Her figure would have allowed her to fall into a bombshell mold. But her allure was more mysterious. And even when she topped her smooth features with close-cropped platinum hair she didn't seem as unapproachably perfect as Grace Kelly. Her edge of remoteness—her forlorn, melancholy quality—came from some vague, spiritual dissatisfaction.

Novak's withdrawn yet vivid personality made her an obvious choice to play James Stewart's romantic obsession in "Vertigo" (1958). But she never found a more fitting role than Madge Owens, the small-town beauty queen in "Picnic." When Madge complains that she's tired of being looked at, Novak refreshes the clichéd line with her own nervous reticence. The drama is wretchedly predictable, but when Novak and William Holden break into a hip-swaying dance it becomes a suspended moment of seduction—for the characters and for the audience.

May 22-23: "Track 29" (1988, Nicolas Roeg), with Theresa Russell and Gary Oldman; and "Eureka" (1985, Roeg), with Gene Hackman, Russell, Rutger Hauer, and Mickey Rourke.
From May 24: "Hour of the Wolf" (1968, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Max von Sydow and Liv Ullmann; and "The Passion of Anna" (1970, Bergman), with Ullmann, Bibi Andersson, von Sydow, and Erland Josephson.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)
May 15: "Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid" (1973, Sam Peckinpah), with James Coburn and Kris Kristofferson; and "Ride the High Country" (1962, Peckinpah), with Joel McCrea, Randolph Scott, and Mariette Hartley.
May 16-17: "Forty Guns" (1958, Sam Fuller), with Barbara Stanwyck and Barry Sullivan; and "Rancho Notorious" (1952, Fritz Lang), with Marlene Dietrich, Arthur Kennedy, and Mel Ferrer.
May 18-19: "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" (†).
May 20: "End of the Trail" (1932, D. Ross Lederman), with Tim McCoy; "One Way Trail" (1931, Ray Taylor), with McCoy; and "The Lone Rider" (1930, Louis King), with Buck Jones.
May 21: "Wild Rovers" (1971, Blake Edwards), with William Holden and Ryan O'Neal.
May 22: "The Big Trail" (1930, Raoul Walsh), with John Wayne; and "Colorado Territory" (1949, Raoul Walsh), with Joel McCrea and Virginia Mayo.
May 23-24: "Ride Lonesome" (1959, Budd Boetticher), with Randolph Scott; and "Comanche Station" (1960, Boetticher), with Scott.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
May 15: "Together Again" (1944, Charles Vidor), with Irene Dunne and Charles Boyer; and "Over 21" (1945, Vidor), with Dunne, Alexander Knox, and Charles Coburn.
May 16: "Days and Nights in the Forest" (1969, Satyajit Ray; in Bengali); and "Company Limited" (1971, Ray; in Bengali).
May 17: "Meet John Doe" (1941, Frank Capra), with Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck, and Edward Arnold; and "You Can't Take It with You" (1938, Capra), with Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Lionel Barrymore, and Arnold.
May 18: "Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear" (1988, George A. Romero); and "Cujo" (1983, Lewis Teague), with Dee Wallace.
May 19-20: "Married to the Mob" (1988, Jonathan Demme), with Michelle Pfeiffer, Matthew Modine, and Dean Stockwell; and "Something Wild" (1986, Demme), with Jeff Daniels, Melanie Griffith, and Ray Liotta.
May 21: "Two Women" (1961, Vittorio De Sica; in Italian), with Sophia Loren, Eleanora Brown, Raf Vallone, and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and "Sotto, Sotto" (1985, Lina Wertmüller; in Italian).
May 22: "Running on Empty" (1988, Sidney Lumet), with Christine Lahti, River Phoenix, Judd Hirsch, and Martha Plimpton; and "The Big Chill" (1983, Lawrence Kasdan), with Jeff Goldblum, William Hurt, Kevin Kline, Tom Berenger, and Glenn Close.
May 23: "Suddenly, Last Summer" (1959, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift, and Katharine Hepburn; and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966, Mike Nichols), with Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis.
May 24: "Rain or Shine" (1930, Frank Capra), with Joe Cook, Louise Fazenda, and Joan Peers; and "Dirigible" (1931, Capra), with Jack Holt, Ralph Graves, and Fay Wray.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
May 15: "Diabolique" (1955, Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse; and "Panique" (1946, Julien Duvivier; in French), with Viviane Romance.
May 16: "The Yearling" (1947, Clarence Brown), with Gregory Peck, Jane Wyman, and Claude Jarman, Jr.; and "The Gunfighter" (1950, Henry King), with

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Peck, Millard Mitchell, and Helen Westcott.

May 17: "Ride the High Country" (1962, Sam Peckinpah), with Joel McCrea, Randolph Scott, and Mariette Hartley; and "Junior Bonner" (1972, Peckinpah), with Steve McQueen, Robert Preston, and Ida Lupino.

May 18: "The Old Maid" (1939, Edmund Goulding), with Bette Davis, Miriam Hopkins, Jane Bryan, and George Brent; and "A Stolen Life" (1946, Curtis Bernhardt), with Davis, Glenn Ford, Dane Clark, and Walter Brennan.

May 19: "The Red House" (1947, Delmer Daves), with Edward G. Robinson, Lon McCallister, and Judith Anderson; and "D.O.A." (1950, Rudolph Maté), with Edmond O'Brien.

May 20: "Ninotchka" (1939, Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann; and "Grand Hotel" (†).

May 21: "The Southerner" (1945, Jean Renoir), with Betty Field and Zachary Scott; and "The River" (1951 †).

May 22: "Les Visiteurs du Soir" (1942, Marcel Carné; in French), with Jules Berry, Marie Déa, and Alain Cuny; and "La Ronde" (1950, Max Ophuls; in French), with Gérard Philipe, Danielle Darrieux, Simone Simon, and Jean-Louis Barrault.

May 23: "The Fountainhead" (†); and "The V.I.P.s" (1963, Anthony Asquith), with Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Maggie Smith, Rod Taylor, and Orson Welles.

May 24: "5 Against the House" (1955, Phil Karlson), with Guy Madison and Kim Novak; and "Pushover" (1954, Richard Quine), with Fred MacMurray and Novak.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)

THEATRE 1: Recent films from Argentina, all in Spanish. May 15 at 2:30: "South" (1988, directed by Fernando E. Solanas). . . . ¶ May 15 at 6: "Night of the Pencils" (1986, Héctor Olivera). . . . ¶ May 16 at 2:30: "The Days of June" (1985, Alberto Fischerman). . . . ¶ May 16 at 6 and May 18 at 2:30: "Open from 6 to Midnight" (1987, Victor Dinenzon). . . . ¶ May 18 at 6: "The Days of June." . . . ¶ May 19 at 2:30: "Love Is a Fat Woman" (1987, Alejandro Agresti). . . . ¶ May 19 at 6: "Nobody's Wife" (1982, Maria Luisa Bemberg). . . . ¶ May 20 at 2: "Awaiting the Pallbearers" (1985, Alejandro Doria). . . . ¶ May 20 at 5: "The Loves of Kafka" (1988, Beda Docampo Feijoo). . . . ¶ May 21 at 2: "A Time for Revenge" (1981, Adolfo Aristarain). . . . ¶ May 21 at 5: "Easy Money" (1982, Fernando Ayala). . . . ¶ May 22 at 2:30: "The Loves of Kafka." . . . ¶ May 22 at 6: "Awaiting the Pallbearers." . . . ¶ May 23 at 2:30: "Easy Money." . . . ¶ May 23 at 6: "A Time for Revenge."

THEATRE 2: May 18 at 3 and 6: "Celebration" (1989, Karen Kramer), "Chopi Music of Mozambique" (1987, Ron Hallis), and "In the Wee Hours" (1986, Izak Ben-Meir), all documentaries.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 36th St. at 35th Ave., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)

RIKLIS THEATRE: Two programs of short films by Owen Land and one program by Morgan Fisher. May 17 at 2:30: The first Land program. . . . May 18 at 2:30: The second Land program. . . . May 19 at 2:30: The Fisher program. . . . ¶ "Last of the Sex Goddesses," a retrospective of twelve Kim Novak films. May 19 at 7:30: "Vertigo" (1958, Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart. . . . May 20 at 1: "Pushover" (1954, Richard Quine), with Fred MacMurray. . . . May 20 at 4: "Strangers When We Meet" (1960, Quine), with Kirk Douglas. . . . May 20 at 7:30: "Bell, Book and Candle" (1958, Quine), with Stewart. . . . May 21 at 1: "Picnic" (1955, Joshua Logan), with William Holden. . . . May 21 at 4: "Middle of the Night" (1959, Delbert Mann), with Fredric March. . . . May 24 at 2:30: "Strangers When We Meet."

WARNER COMMUNICATIONS SCREENING ROOM: Through June 1: Twenty-five of the twenty-nine 1988 Peabody Award-winning television programs will be shown, including two segments from "thirtysomething," four interviews from "Bill Moyers' World of Ideas," "The Attic: The Hiding of Anne Frank," and "The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour: Election '88 Coverage." Our best advice is to call the museum for time and film schedules.

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—May 17 at 6: "In Between" (1964-68) and two short films, all by Jonas Mekas. . . . ¶ May 17 at 8: "The Love Parade" (1929, Ernst Lubitsch). . . . ¶ May 18 at 7: Two films by Michael Snow. . . . ¶ May 18 at 8:30: "The Rules of the Game" (1939, Jean Renoir; in French). . . . ¶ May 19 at 6:30: Six films by Peter Kubelka. . . . ¶ May 19 at 8: "He Stands in a Desert Counting the Seconds of His Life" (1985, Mekas). . . . ¶ May 20 at 5: "Thunderbolt" (1929, Josef von Sternberg). . . . ¶ May 20 at 7: "La Région Centrale" (1970-71, Snow). . . . ¶ May 21 at 5: Five films by Maya Deren. . . . ¶ May 21 at 7: "So Is This" (1982) and two short films, all by Snow. . . . ¶ May 21 at 8:30: "I Was Born . . . But" (1932, Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese). . . . ¶ May 24 at 7: "Paris 1900" (1948, Nicole Vedrès). . . . ¶ May 24 at 8:30: Outtakes from seven Deren films.

Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2111)—May 15 at 8: "The Chase" (1946, Arthur Ripley), with Michèle Morgan, Robert Cummings, and Peter Lorre. . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: "Bad Blood" (Leos Carax; in French). . . . ¶ May 17 at 8: "New Angle International Video Festival," the first of two programs of award-winning short experimental videotapes. . . . ¶ May 18 at 8: Videos by Joe Gibbons, who will be present. . . . ¶ May 18 at 10:30: "Violated Angels" (1967) and "The Embryo Hunts in Secret" (1966), both by Wakamatsu Koji, in Japanese. . . . ¶ May 19 at 8: "Epitaph" (1989) and "The Substance of Things Hoped For" (1989), by Nina Fonoroff, who will be present. . . . ¶ May 20 at 8: Films by Mark Lapone, who will be present. . . . ¶ May 21 at 3: "Top Stripper" (1982, Morita Yoshimitsu; in Japanese). . . . ¶ May 21 at 8: "Sunset Boulevard" (1950, Billy Wilder), with Gloria Swanson and William Holden; and short films by Kenneth Anger and others. . . . ¶ May 22 at 8: "Nightmare Alley" (1947, Edmund Goulding), with Tyrone Power and Coleen Gray. . . . ¶ May 23 at 8: "He Who Gets Slapped" (1924, Victor Sjöstrom; silent), with Lon Chaney. . . . ¶ May 24 at 8: "New Angle International Video Festival," the second of two programs of award-winning short experimental videotapes.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Films, videotapes, and performances by thirty-four artists as part of the 1989 Biennial Exhibition. May 16: "The Last Night of Rasputin" (1989), a film by Eleanor Antin, who will introduce it with a dance performance. Showings at 1:15 and 6:30. . . . ¶ May 18-24: "Plain Talk and Common Sense (Uncommon Senses)" (1987, Jon Jost). Showings Tuesday at 1:30 and 5:30, Wednesday through Saturday at noon, and Sunday at 1; and "Decodings" (1988, Michael Wallin) and "Cooperation of Parts" (1987, Daniel Eisenberg). Showings Tuesday at 4, Wednesday through Saturday at 3, and Sunday at 4.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—MB Playhouse, a chance to see the television dramas you may have missed in the past thirty years. May 16-20: Evelyn Waugh's "Brideshead Revisited, Episode 11: The Death of Lord Marchmain" (1982, Granada Television), with Laurence Olivier. . . . Starting May 23: William Nicholson's "Shadowlands" (1985), with Joss Ackland and Claire Bloom. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6, and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 3. . . . ¶ Comedy specials and episodes from comedy series. May 16-20: "The Real McCoys" (1957), with Walter Brennan; and "The Andy Griffith Show" (1960). . . . Starting May 23: "Wendy and Me" (1964), with George Burns, Ron Harper, and Connie Stevens; and "Oh, Madeline" (1983), with Madeline Kahn. Showings Tuesdays at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:15. . . . ¶ Starting May 16: "Cinderella" (1957, Ralph Nelson), with Julie Andrews, Howard Lindsay, Dorothy Stickney, Ilka Chase, Edith Adams, Kay Ballard, and Alice Ghostley. Music and lyrics by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. Showings Tuesdays at 2:30 and 6:30, and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30.

French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—May 17 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Death in the Garden" (1956, Luis Buñuel; in French), with Charles Vanel, Simone Signoret, Michel Piccoli, and Georges Marchal. . . . ¶ May 24 at noon, 3:45, and 7: "The Roads of Exile" (1978, Claude Goretta; in French), with François Simon, Dominique Labourier, Roland Bertin, and David Markham.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Arlene Croce.)

The Adventures of Baron Munchausen—The Baron, who lived from 1720 to 1797, was a fibber of genius—a fabulist. Terry Gilliam, who directed this special-effects extravaganza, sees his theme as the liar as artist; his Munchausen (John Neville) is a poet, a man of imagination. He's pitted against the practical men who believe in facts and compromise and comformity (i.e., the men who finance movies). The elements are here for a fantasy on the order of "The Wizard of Oz" and "Pinocchio" and the 1940 "Thief of Bagdad," yet the picture is dry and choppy and remote. The design (by Dante Ferretti) and the cinematography (by Giuseppe Rotunno) are sometimes magnificent, and there are scenes that are near-inspired. Something is missing, though: a bit of conviction—of ardor and awe. The picture is almost devoid of emotional shadings. With Sarah Polley, Oliver Reed, who's a great rampaging Vulcan, Robin Williams (uncredited) as the King of the Moon, Uma Thurman as Venus, and Eric Idle, Jonathan Pryce, and Charles McKeown, who co-wrote the script with Gilliam.—P.K. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/3/89.) (Plaza, Waverly, and Metro Cinema.)

Chocolat—Whatever Claire Denis's first feature is supposed to be about, it proves, at least, that the English don't have a monopoly on swanky colonial torpor. The movie is constructed as an extended flashback: a young Frenchwoman (named France) travelling in Africa remembers her fifties girlhood in a remote outpost of Cameroon, where her father was a district officer. Most of this story consists of smoldering looks exchanged by the girl's beautiful mother (Giulia Boschi) and the family's handsome African "boy," Protée (Isaach de Bankolé). When Maman feels herself becoming too hot and bothered at the sight of the noble black man, she brusquely orders him to fetch something; Protée deals with his frustration by taking a lot of showers. Nothing actually happens. In denying him any kind of release for his pent-up desire, Denis encourages us to think she's making a political point. What she's really doing is dehumanizing him—treating him as a gleaming hunk whose anger and wounded reserve just make him more exotically alluring. "Chocolat" looks pretty good, but it's merde in a fancy wrapper. In French.—T.R. (Cinema Studio.)

Dangerous Liaisons—One of the least static costumes films ever made, and what costumes! The women—Glenn Close, Michelle Pfeiffer, Uma Thurman, Swoosie Kurtz, Mildred Natwick—look as if they'd been dressed by Gainsborough. (Actually, it was James Acheson, who also dressed "The Last Emperor.") Principally about the erotic power games played by the Marquise de Merteuil (Glenn Close) and the Vicomte de Valmont (John Malkovich), who were once lovers but are now allies and co-conspirators, this first-rate piece of work by the daring and agile director Stephen Frears is alive in a way that movies of classics rarely are. The paradisially beautiful Pfeiffer is wonderfully affecting as the pawn of the debauchers' final game. The screenwriter, Christopher Hampton, re-worked his 1985 theatrical version of the 1782 novel by Choderlos de Laclos; cinematography by Philippe Rousselot.—P.K. (1/9/89) (Festival; through May 18.)

Field of Dreams—Doggerel emotion. Kevin Costner, a New Age farmer in Iowa, longs to be reconciled with his dead father, a minor-league baseball player whose outlook he had rejected in the sixties. He hears a whispered command to build a baseball field, and when he does the spirits of Shoeless Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta) and the other White Sox who were barred from baseball for life after the 1919 World Series scandal arrive and play regularly. This is only the beginning of the hero's mystical encounters. That the film is sincere doesn't mean it's not manipulative; when the weepers in the audience start up, you may feel like a pariah if you're not moved. Adapted by the writer-director Phil Alden Robinson from W. P. Kinsella's 1982 novel, "Shoeless Joe." With Amy Madigan, James Earl Jones, Burt Lancaster, Dwier Brown as the father, and Gaby Hoffman.—P.K. (5/1/89) (Bay Cinema, 59th Street East Cinema, Art Greenwich Twin, Carnegie Hall Cinema, and Regency.)

The Fountainhead (1949)—A little delirious and definitely skewed. Can people who see this picture ever forget the sight of the silvery-blond columnist Dominique (Patricia Neal) galloping up on her black horse and slashing her riding crop across the face of the tall, mocking stranger who had looked at her impertinently while he was using a pneumatic drill in the quarry? He's the genius architect Howard Roark (Gary Cooper). When his design for a public-housing project is altered, he dynamites the building; put on trial, he justifies his action with an attack on collectivism and the parasites of the left. Ayn Rand wrote the screenplay, based on her 1943 novel, and, true to her hero's principles, she wouldn't permit any changes in her (megalomaniac, comic-book) dialogue. King Vidor directed this paean to the individualism of "superior" people, made in a sleek, hollow, Expressionist style that owes a lot to film noir. It's an extravaganza of romantic, right-wing camp, with the hyper-articulate superman Roark standing in the wind on top of a phallic skyscraper, and the fierce, passionate Dominique rising in an open elevator to join him there. Vidor wanted Frank Lloyd Wright—on whom Roark was based—to design Roark's buildings, but had to settle for some bland imitations; the futurist structures are often obvious models and painted backgrounds. With Raymond Massey as the newspaper tycoon; Kent Smith as the mediocre architect; Robert Douglas as the despicable architecture critic; and Henry Hull as Roark's Louis Sullivan-like teacher.—P. K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 23.)

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (1968)—In this Sergio Leone spaghetti Western, if a man crosses a street in Santa Fe, the street looks half a mile wide; a farmer's hut has rooms opening into rooms into the distance, like the Metropolitan Museum; a cowtown hotel has a plush lobby big enough for a political convention. The movie is like "High Noon" and "The Ox-Bow Incident" and a dozen others all scrambled together and playing in a giant echo chamber. The bad men are enormously, preposterously evil—larger-than-life parodies—and each wound they inflict is insanely garish. The change of scale is rather fascinating. This Western, set in our Civil War period but shot in Spain, looks more foreign to us than an ordinary Italian film. With Clint Eastwood, Eli Wallach, and Lee Van Cleef.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; May 18-19.)

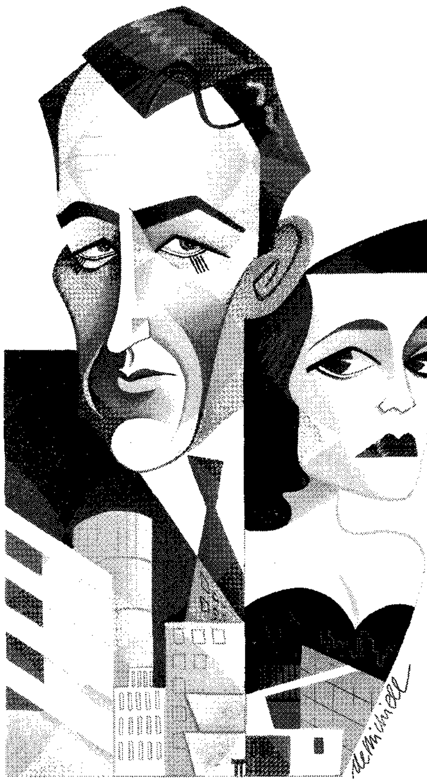
Grand Hotel (1932)—From her first line, "I have never been so tired in my life," Greta Garbo sets the movie in vibration with her extraordinary sensual presence. ("Mademoiselle Hamlet," Alice B. Toklas called her.) Garbo plays a *première danseuse* whose career is fading—a weary, disillusioned woman briefly reconciled to life by a passion for a shady nobleman: John Barrymore. Garbo was only twenty-six when she played this role (Barrymore was fifty), but the fatigue, the despair, seem genuine. There is every reason to reject "Grand Hotel" as an elaborate chunk of artifice; there are no redeeming qualities in Vicki Baum's excruciating concepts of character and fate, and anyone who goes to see this movie expecting an intelligent script, or even "good acting," should have his head examined. Most of the players give impossibly bad performances—they chew up the camera. But if you want to see what screen glamour used to be, and what, originally, "stars" were, this is perhaps the best example of all time. As a secretary working in the hotel, there is a startlingly sexy minx named Joan Crawford, who bears only a slight resemblance to the later zombie of that name; at about twenty-six also, she still connected with other actors, and her scenes with Lionel Barrymore (in one of his rare likable performances: he's a dying man spending his life savings on a last fling) show a real rapport. The fifth star is Wallace Beery, as a brutal, crooked tycoon; he overacts mightily and charmlessly. Also in the cast are Lewis Stone and Jean Hersholt. Directed by Edmund Goulding, from William A. Drake's adaptation of Vicki Baum's "Menschen im Hotel."—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 20.)

Heathers—Westerburg High's three rich beauties who make life hell for those less gilded are all named Heather. Their reluctant associate, Veronica (Winona Ryder), confides in her diary that she dreams of "a world without Heather," and a psychotically fearless juvenile delinquent, J.D. (Christian Slater), materializes, and goads her to become his accomplice in making her dream come true. The script, by Daniel Waters, has a lot of prankish, spiky dialogue and some good rowdy slapstick nastiness, such as Veronica and J.D.'s killing two football heroes and arranging their deaths to suggest that they were lovers in a suicide pact; the script promises that the picture will lift off into the junior division of Blue Velvetland. But layers of didacticism weigh it down, and the young, inexperienced director, Michael Lehmann (who uses hyper-bright colors for a facetious artificial effect), doesn't find the right moods for the gags. Where's the sting?—P.K. (4/17/89) (Embassy. . . . ¶ Loews 34th Street Showplace; through May 23.)

High Hopes—Mike Leigh's wacked-out comedy-drama about life in Thatcherland features three couples: the rich twits (David Bamber and Lesley Manville as a young champagne dealer and his cool socialite wife); the pushy yups (Philip Jackson and Heather Tobias as a boorish car salesman and his shrill, social-climber wife); the working poor (bearded Philip Davis and dark-eyed Ruth Sheen as a pot-smoking Marxist who scrapes by as a motorcycle messenger and his companion of ten years, who like to grow things). This may sound like a liberal-left horror, but the English delight in extreme, preposterous silliness hasn't died even among the serious left: the characters keep turning into absurdist cartoons. It's an exuberantly likable movie—not always satisfying but never drab, never ordinary.—P.K. (2/20/89) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Jan Švankmajer: Alchemist of the Surreal—The films of the great Czech animator Jan Švankmajer are magically sinister and grotesquely witty, like the stories of E. T. A. Hoffmann. The eight shorts in this program (made between 1964 and 1983) are fiercely concentrated, prodigiously inventive, and as unnerving as half-remembered nightmares. Several of them mix live action with different styles of animation—puppets, clay, objects—and one, "The Ossuary," is strictly documentary (it's the least successful of these films). There are four outright masterpieces here, each amazingly distinct from the others. "Jabberwocky" is an antic and eerie interpretation of the Carroll poem, a brilliant dance of doll-house objects. "Dimensions of Dialogue" is a series of face-to-face encounters of variously composed heads. "Down to the Cellar" is a suggestive little story (largely live-action) about a small girl's adventures in a dark basement. Perhaps best of all is "The Fall of the House of Usher," a horror film like no other: Poe's text is illustrated entirely by black-and-white images of an empty, ruined house and the bleak landscape surrounding it, and Švankmajer seems, somehow, to animate the very processes of nature—to show us centuries of decay in fifteen minutes.—T.R. (Film Forum 1; through May 16.)

Lawrence of Arabia (1962)—If you went to see it under the delusion that it was going to be about T. E. Lawrence, you probably stayed to enjoy the vastness of the desert and the pleasures of the senses that a huge movie epic can provide. Directed by David Lean, from a script by Robert Bolt, loosely based on Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," this picture fails to give an acceptable interpretation of Lawrence, or to keep its action intelligible, but it is one of the most literate and tasteful and exciting of expensive spectacles. The central figure is played quite stunningly by Peter O'Toole, though he seems to be doing "Lord Jim"—which he was cast in a couple of years later (and then it looked as if he were doing Lawrence all over again). Bolt and Lean turn the hero into such a flamboyant poetic enigma that he is displaced in the film by a simpler hero—Omar Sharif's Ali, a handsome sheikh with liquid brown eyes and conventionally sympathetic lines to speak. As it became apparent that most people in the audience hadn't the remotest idea of what the Arabs and the Turks were doing in the First World War, or which was which, or why the English cared, the question raised by the movie was: Can complicated historical events and a complex hero really get across in a spectacle? With Alec Guinness, José Ferrer, Anthony Quinn, Arthur Kennedy, Jack Hawkins, and Donald Wolfit. Cinematography by Freddie Young; music by Maurice Jarre. (The film, substantially cut after its first release, has been restored to a more or less definitive version, running 217 minutes.)—P.K. (Ziegfeld.)



Gary Cooper and Patricia Neal in "The Fountainhead"

La Lectrice—Michel Deville's film has a gimmicky structure: a woman (Miou-Miou), in bed with her lover, reads aloud to him Raymond Jean's novel "La Lectrice," which is about a woman who makes her living by reading to people. The woman in bed naturally casts herself as the novel's heroine, and for most of the movie we watch Miou-Miou, as the professional reader, entertaining her various clients: a paralyzed teen-age boy, to whom she reads Maupassant and Baudelaire; a general's widow, to whom she reads Marx and other political literature; a nervous businessman, whom she treats to Marguerite Duras; and so on. "La Lectrice" fancies itself a celebration of the delights of reading and, in a backhanded way, it sort of is: it makes you feel like staying in bed and never, ever going to the movies again. Also with Patrick Chesnais, Régis Royer, and, as the widow, the radiant Maria Casarès. In French.—T.R. (68th St. Playhouse; through May 18. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting May 19.)

Let's Get Lost—This documentary, by Bruce

Weber, isn't primarily about Chet Baker the jazz trumpeter and singer: it's about Chet Baker the love object, the fetish. And maybe because Weber, despite his lifelong fixation on this charmer, knew him only as a battered, treacherous wreck, in the two years before his death, it's one of the most suggestive (and unresolved) films ever made. The soundtrack is made up of Baker recordings that span more than three decades—the idealized essence of the man. The 16-mm. black-and-white cinematography (by Jeff Preiss) is reticent yet expressive, impassioned; the film has a great look.—P.K. (5/1/89) (Quad Cinema, and Carnegie Screening Room.)

Moscow on the Hudson (1984)—Robin Williams as a Russian sax player who defects, in Paul Mazursky's wonderful comedy about a tragedy—about going away forever, about not being able to go home. The defection takes place in Bloomingdale's, and the plot radiates from this temple of the mouth-watering temptations of capitalist decadence. It doesn't take long before the sax player discovers the isolation and paranoia of living in New York. The brutality of the city confuses him; in Russia, he says, he knew who the enemy was. Imaginative and mellow, this movie displays Mazursky's distinctive funky lyricism at its best. With Maria Conchita Alonso, a beauty who's an unself-conscious cutup, Alejandro Rey as a Cuban lawyer, and Cleavant Derricks as a security guard. The film's comic rhythm (though not its mood) falters in the last third.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; May 19-20.)

Murmur of the Heart (1971)—Louis Malle's exhilarating high comedy about French bourgeois life. He looks into his own back yard—the film is set in Dijon in 1954, at the time of Dien Bien Phu, and it's about the sex education of the fourteen-year-old Laurent (Benoit Ferreux), the youngest, brightest son of a successful gynecologist (Daniel Gélin) and his Italian-born wife (Léa Massari). Malle sees not only the prudent, punctilious surface but the volatile and slovenly life underneath. His bourgeois bestiary is funny and appalling and also—surprisingly—hardy and happy. This is perhaps the first time on film that anyone has shown us the bourgeoisie enjoying its privileges. Massari is superb as Clara, the carelessly sensual mother who is loved by her sons because of her indifference to the bourgeois forms, which they nevertheless accept—on the surface, that is. With Michel Lonsdale as Father Henri. The script is by Malle. In French. —P.K. (Lincoln Plaza.)

New York Stories—A three-part anthology film, with sections by Martin Scorsese, Francis Coppola, and Woody Allen. Scorsese's intensely enjoyable "Life Lessons" features a masterly performance by Nick Nolte as an Action painter who needs tumult in his life. (Richard Price wrote the script.) Coppola's "Life Without Zoe" is a forgettable attempt to use New York as a city out of the Arabian Nights. Woody Allen's "Oedipus Wrecks" is a Freudian vaudeville about a Jewish lawyer (played by Allen) who feels that if he marries a Gentile (Mia Farrow) he'll escape his mother (Mae Questel). (He doesn't stand a chance.) Allen's short-story comedy is a bit too long and schematic, but it has some genuine laughs, and a lovely performance by Julie Kavner as a hopeless involuntary comic. All told, the movie is a two-base hit.—P.K. (3/20/89) (Guild. . . . ¶ Cinema 3rd Avenue; through May 18.)

Plisetskaya Dances (1965)—The camera cheats once or twice in this Russian documentary about the fiery Bolshoi ballerina, making her into an inferno of speed, but there are times—as in the blazing excerpts from "Don Quixote"—when it does not lie.—A.C. (Biograph Cinema; May 21.)

Rain Man—Dustin Hoffman is Raymond, an autistic savant who lives in an institution in Cincinnati, and Tom Cruise is his huckster brother Charlie, an L.A. car dealer, who kidnaps him, hoping to get hold of some of the three million dollars that their father has left in trust for Raymond's care. Hoffman upstages the movie; Cruise's performance consists of not smiling too much—so as not to distract his fans from watching Hoffman. The director, Barry Levinson, stretches out the scenes until they yawn. But the picture has its effectiveness: people are crying at it. Of course they're crying at it—it's a piece of wet kitsch. With Valeria Golino; Ronald Bass was the principal screenwriter.—P.K. (2/6/89) (Loews New York Twin, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; through May 18.)

The River (1951)—Jean Renoir's first color film, made in India, in English, was adapted from Rumer Godden's novel about a British family in India and shot along the banks of the Ganges by Renoir's great cinematographer nephew, Claude Renoir. It's a poetic study of the contact of two civilizations. Renoir does not usurp the position of an insider; he sees India with western eyes—eyes so sensitive and highly trained that his vision of India is a mythic poem set in the midst of the Indian river of life. This river encompasses death (the Goddess Kali episode, the holy cobra that kills the child) in a way that American audiences tend to find disturbing. Rumer Godden's themes and story line are part of the texture, interwoven with the ritual feasts, the festivals, the rhythms of native music, and some people, accustomed to films edited for dramatic crescendo, dislike the serene flow—so much is going on that they feel nothing happens. There are static patches of dialogue, and some of the casting is questionable, but the theme (outsiders in a culture) meshes perfectly with the director's own position as a moviemaker in India, and visually the film is serenely yet passionately beautiful. With the dancer Radha, Nora Swinburne, Adrienne Corri, and Esmond Knight. Adapted by Renoir and Rumer Godden. —P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 21.)

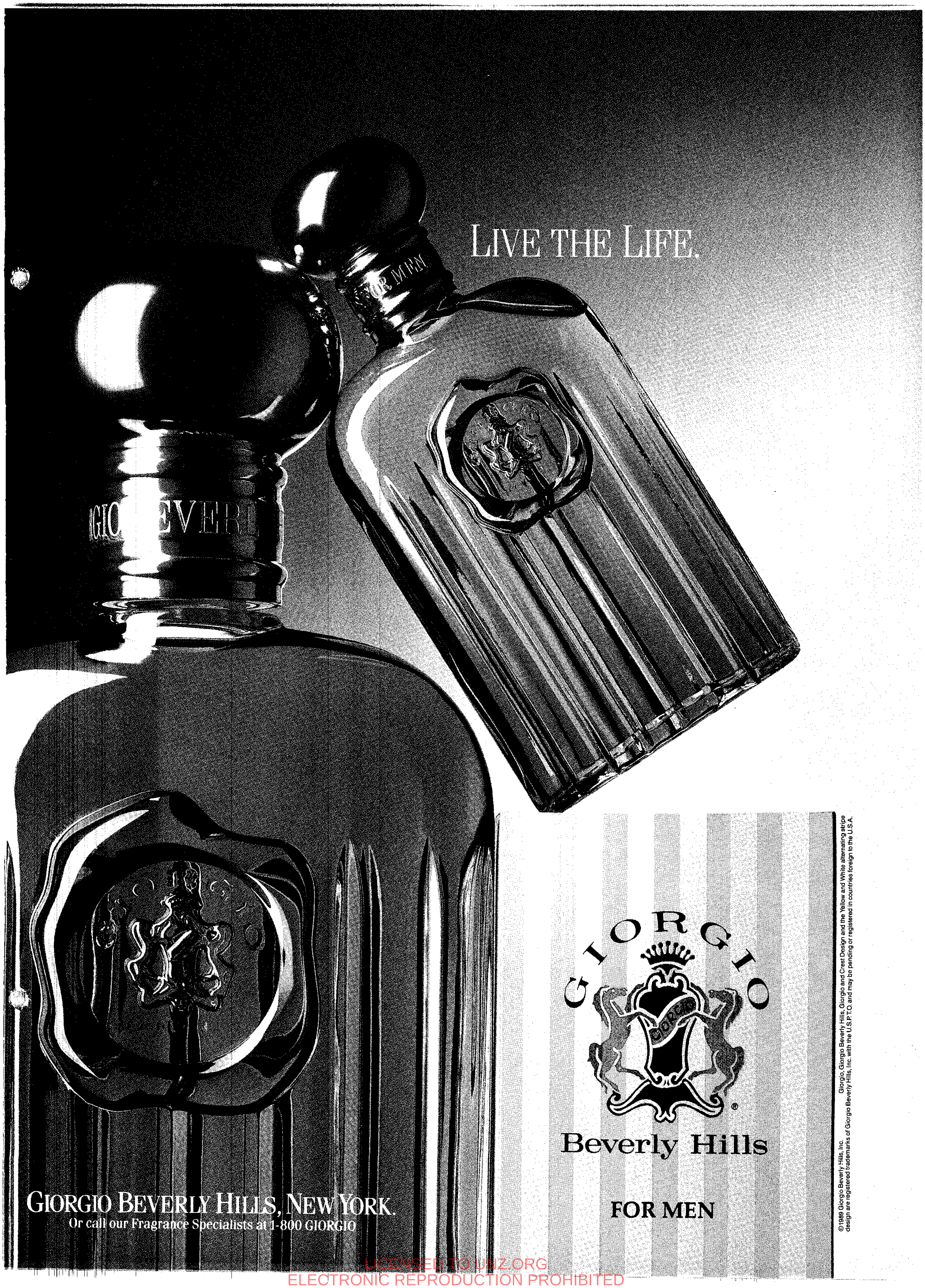
Clint Eastwood in "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly"

Say Anything—Lloyd Dobler (John Cusack) is a high-school senior who doesn't know what he wants to do yet. And he's so in awe of Diane (Ione Skye), the class valedictorian and prize student, that when he phones to ask her to the graduation party he's so nervous he can't keep up a sequential conversation—he babbles, and talks in spurts. Yet when they're out together he makes Diane feel happier than she has ever been. As for Lloyd, he's found bliss. He wants to hang on to Diane—for life. This first picture directed by Cameron Crowe (who wrote "Fast Times at Ridgemont High") is unabashedly romantic about Lloyd Dobler's capacity to make a commitment. Crowe is great here on oddity and fringe moments; the comedy helps to dry out the romanticism—to give it lightness and a trace of enchantment. And Cusack is a wonder: Lloyd's (nearly) blank look tells you that a lot of things are going on inside him—he has a buzz in his blank face. Crowe's script has some central flaws, and there's no special moviemaking excitement in the picture, but it's a lovely piece of work. Clearly, Crowe loves actors. There's a compelling performance by John Mahoney as Diane's father; there are a couple of astonishingly fluid scenes between Cusack and his real-life sister Joan, playing Lloyd's sister. And the cast includes Lili Taylor as the girl who has written sixty-five songs about her ex-boyfriend's perfidiousness, Kim Walker, Loren Dean, Jason Gould, Eric Stoltz, Amy Brooks, Chynna Phillips, Lois Chiles, Philip Baker Hall, and a terrific three-year-old, Glenn Walker Harris, Jr.—P.K. (5/15/89) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Gotham Cinema.)

Scandal—Tepid. The director, Michael Caton-Jones, and the writer, Michael Thomas, who dig up the Profumo affair, might have used it as the basis for a satirical slice of history; instead, they've made a sentimental docudrama—one more English film about the cruelty of the class system. What sustains a viewer is the narrative, with its evocative details of life in London from 1959 to 1963—how teen-age showgirl Christine Keeler (Joanne Whalley-Kilmer), bored with the middle-aged dignitaries that the society osteopath Stephen Ward (John Hurt) introduced her to, took on a West Indian lover and then another West Indian, and how, as a result of a violent quarrel between the two, a newspaperman got on her trail. She then offered up the story of her earlier gentlemen callers, the Tory Secretary of State for War, John Profumo (Ian McKellen), and the assistant naval attaché of the Soviet Embassy (Jeroen Krabbé). And bang! The tabloids whipped up indignation over the decadence of the "Establishment"—over sadomasochism and spies and naked bathing in Lord Astor's pool. Along the way there's Ward introducing Christine to hash and her becoming spacey, and the music changing, and the kinky Victorian repressiveness giving way to London's Swinging Sixties. But Whalley-Kilmer's Christine is opaque, unreadable. She comes to life a bit in her scenes with her showgirl pal, Mandy Rice-Davies, played by Bridget Fonda, who brings a gamine crispness to the role. She's the movie's only wild card. With Daniel Massey, Roland Gift, Britt Ekland, Leslie Phillips, and Trevor Eve.—P.K. (5/15/89) (Gramercy, Cinema I, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her long-time live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. Cinematography by José Luis Alcaine. In Spanish. —P.K. (11/14/88) (Cinema Studio.)

Working Girl—Mike Nichols made this yuppie Cinderella romance, with Melanie Griffith as Tess McGill, a poor but enterprising girl from Staten Island who fights off the sleazoid bosses and struggles to break through the educational-background barriers and climb from Wall Street secretary to executive. We're supposed to be cheered by watching Tess become part of the establishment. Griffith is very appealing, and she carries what there is of the picture, but this is the kind of star performance in which the heroine's misty eyes and soft-focus smiles (which suggest bleariness) are supposed to turn our brains to jelly. After a bouncy, promising opening, the staging becomes so broad you can't tell whether satire is intended or just dumb jokes. With Sigourney Weaver, Harrison Ford, Joan Cusack, and Alec Baldwin. The script is credited to Kevin Wade. —P.K. (1/9/89) (Cinema 3.)



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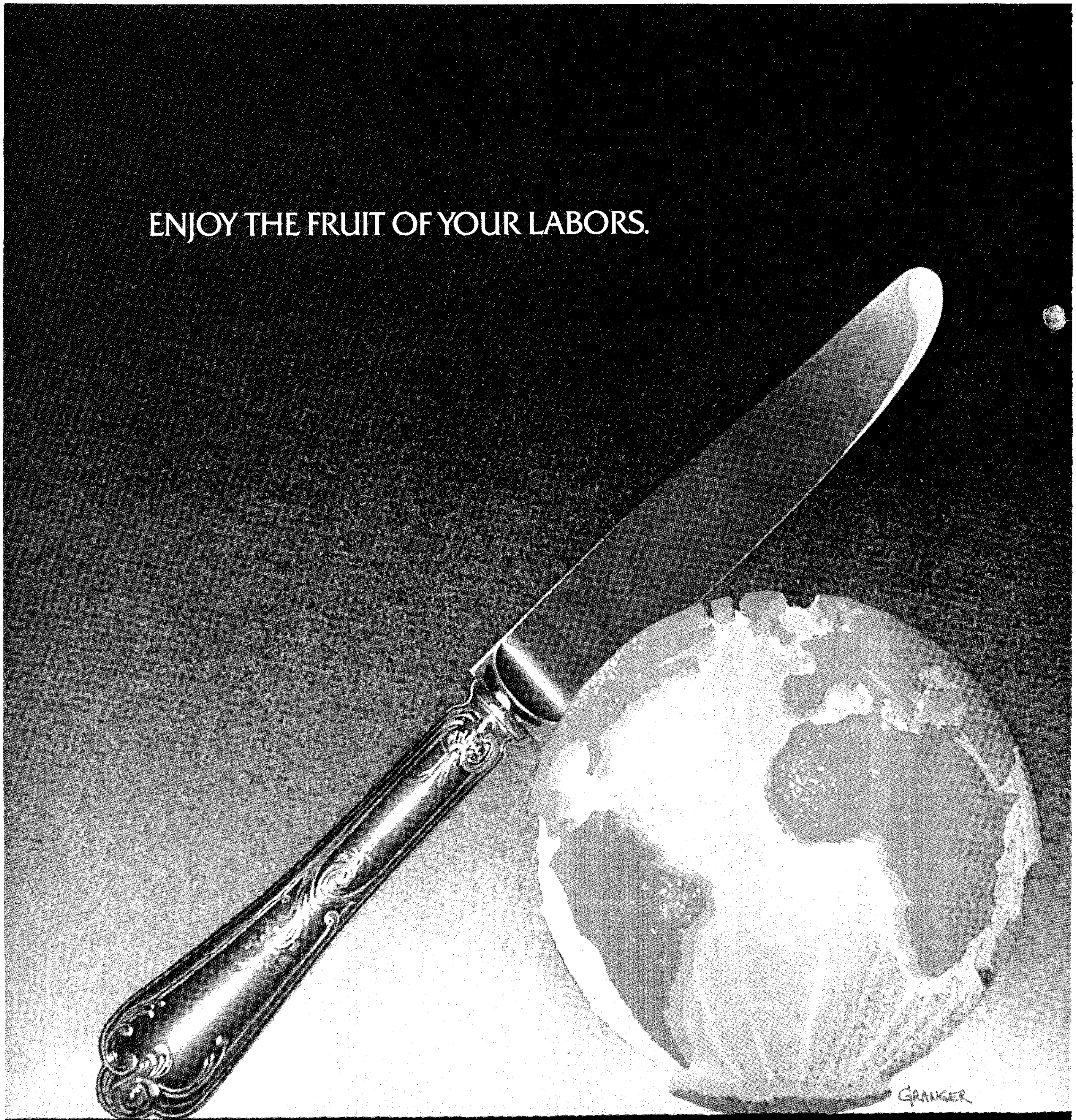
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THE NEW YORKER

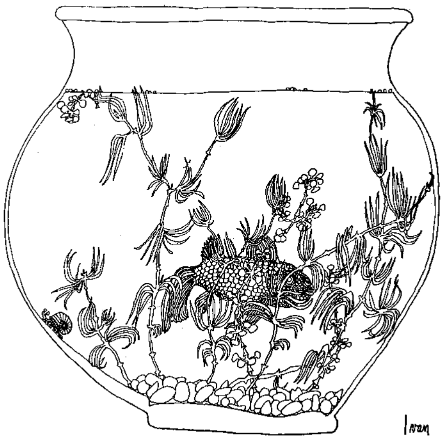
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A YOUNG woman we know writes:

I applied for health insurance recently, and was told that I was an enormous risk. The reasons for this, which were explained to me by a friendly agent of the company, were that I was likely, because of my age, to bear a child, whose birth the company would have to pay for, and that I lived in Manhattan, which, according to their calculations, was the unhealthiest and most dangerous place in New York State. I did not argue—though I might have—with either of these premises. A third reason that I was a great risk, which also hinged on my age and where I lived, was that I might be suffering from a long and expensive fatal illness. The company was so reluctant to assume this risk—*me*—that it would not insure me until it had taken a sample of my blood to test for antibodies for the virus called HIV, whose presence would show that I was in danger of developing acquired-immunodeficiency syndrome. The company would do this, I was informed by letter, entirely at its own expense and at my convenience. A few days later, a woman phoned me and asked if I could be home at twelve-thirty on the next Wednesday afternoon, so that a specially trained person could come and take my blood. I was surprised, and asked if I couldn't go to a clinic somewhere instead, and the woman said, "Oh dear, it's so much more *private* at home, and most of our clients welcome that." As an afterthought, she told me that the person who would be stopping by was named Tom.

As it turned out, my husband and I spent the entire morning waiting for Tom. We sat on the sofa and stared at each other. We read the paper for a while. Then the doorbell rang: it was Tom, a small Korean man in a gray suit, carrying a doctor's bag and a briefcase. He immediately headed for the kitchen, sat down at the kitchen table, and opened his bag and took out a tourniquet. We said we were glad to meet him, and he said he was glad to meet us. I sat down next to him, and my husband sat next to me, because I asked him to. It was apparent that I should roll up the sleeve of my sweater, and I did. It suddenly seemed incredible to me that I was going to have blood taken from my arm at my kitchen table. There was a peculiar feeling of quaintness about the procedure. The doctor's bag, the kitchen chairs—it felt like a *house call*. I asked Tom, by way of conversation, whether this was what he did all day—go around to people's apartments and take their blood—and he said that it was, and that he didn't mind doing it. He asked me to make a fist, and I made one. This was a trial fist. He asked us to examine the needles in their cases and to note that the cases were sealed and the needles were therefore sterile. We noted that they were. He asked me to make a fist again, and I did, screwing up my face and turning toward my husband. Tom filled three vials with blood and then took the needle out. My arm hurt. He told me to put my head down, but I told him I was all right.



"In all my experience, it is the men who faint," Tom said. "They faint when I put the tourniquet on, or they faint *while* I am taking the blood, which can make a mess." He paused. "I try to watch for that. But the women never."

"The women don't faint?" I repeated. I looked down at his hands. "You're not wearing gloves?" I asked.

"It makes the work too difficult to wear those gloves," he said. "When I wear them, sometimes I can't find the vein." He paused, and went on to say, "The women don't faint, or throw up, but sometimes they just don't keep their appointments, and that, I think, is very peculiar."

It didn't seem at all peculiar to me, because I had realized almost at the moment I was told I would have to have this test that part of me didn't *want* to know whether or not I had been exposed to the virus. I was feeling fine, and I knew that even if I had been exposed I might stay healthy for quite a long time—with luck, indefinitely. But the knowledge that I had been exposed would wreck any semblance of comfortable normality: it would mark me for death.

In the following week, as I waited for the result, my daily traffic with the world altered profoundly. I ceased to think in any concrete way about the future; I developed a distant, suspicious attitude toward my own body, viewing it as a possible betrayer; and I became engrossed in a systematic review of the past. Obsessively, I returned to a questionnaire I had come across by chance months earlier. Negative responses to the questions meant that you had been or were at risk of contracting AIDS: “Have you been celibate for the last ten years? If not, have you had sexual relations with only one person during the past ten years, and are you *perfectly* assured of his or her faithfulness? If not, are you *perfectly* assured of the complete sexual and drug use history of every person with whom you have had sexual relations during that time? If so, are you absolutely certain of the history of every partner of *every one* of these individuals over a ten year period?” I could not answer any of the questions affirmatively, and certainly I could find out nothing now that would help me answer them. I developed a cough, and was sure that it was the first sign of illness.

Intimate though the test procedure had been, the announcement of the test result was impersonal. An employee of the health-insurance company called and left a message on our answering machine: The results were “perfect,” and the policy would be arriving in the mail. I was welcomed to the —— Company. Immediately after hearing this message, I ran a bath, and a few minutes later, in the tub, I was overtaken by a wave of trembling, a physical response to fear that I had had only once before in my life: when I was missed by the width of a wire by a truck speeding down Broadway.

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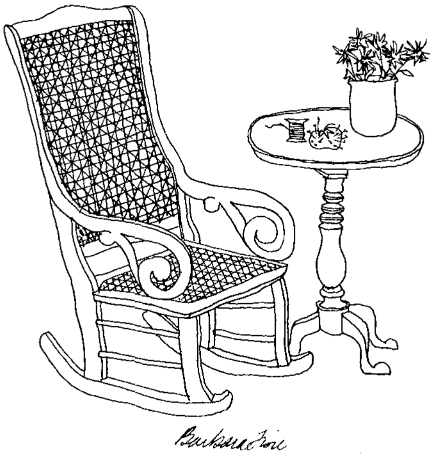
Livelihood

AN unusual spiritual figure in Yonkers is Bernie Glassman, a Zen abbot who is the guiding force behind the manufacture of what many people believe is New York’s best cheesecake. Bernie Glassman’s Zen, or dharma, name is Tetsugen, which means in Japanese “to completely penetrate the subtleties of life”; he explains that this is a hopeful name rather than a descriptive one. To his disciples he is known as Tetsugen Glassman, Sensei, or Teacher, but he is happy to be called Bernard or Bernie. In addition to the cheesecake, his bakery, which is called Greyston, makes terrific lemon-mousse cakes, lemon tarts, strawberry-mousse cakes, and chocolate walnut lace tarts, and is working with the ice-cream makers Ben & Jerry’s to create the perfect brownie for Ben & Jerry’s Brownie Bar. The bakery is now profitable (its cheesecake placed first on a short list of great New York cheesecakes compiled by the *News* last week), and Greyston has decided to direct much of its profit into rehabilitating housing for the homeless of Yonkers.

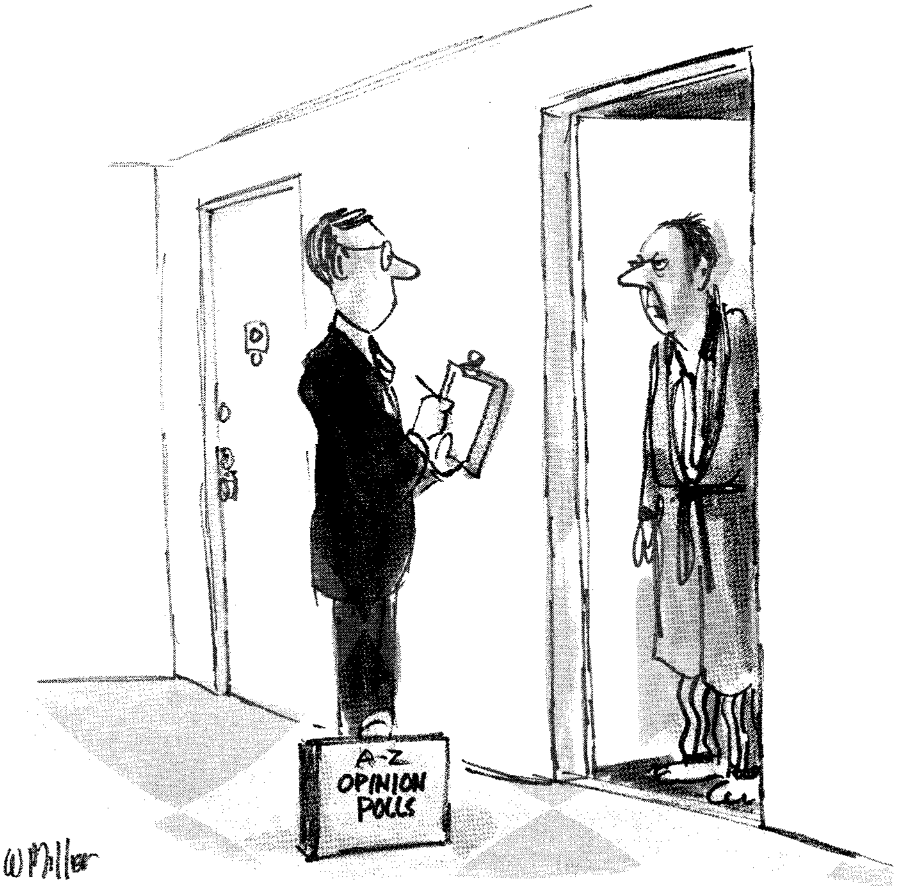
When we visited Greyston recently, we first met Helen Glassman, who knew her husband before he became enlightened (they met and married in the early sixties, when Bernard Glassman was an aerospace engineer), and who is herself a Zen adept. She took us on a tour of the bakery, a converted lasagna factory on a poky street in a neighborhood of small factories. “One of the Zen patriarchs once said that a day of no work is a day of no food,” she told us. “He was a tough bird—they all were. And Sensei’s mandala for our community—that’s a kind of spiritual map—specifies meditation, livelihood, and social action among our goals. So we set about finding a livelihood. There’s a bakery out in California that’s run by a Zen community. In 1982, we went out there—three guys and I—and they showed us a lot. At the time, we were in Riverdale, and we tried running a little catering business. Then we moved here to Yonkers, and we started baking. At first, we hoped to bake bread. Bread is something you can believe in. But it turns out that breads are a nightmare to market. You have to go to supermarkets, and you end up competing with Pepperidge Farm. But cakes and pastries can be sold directly to restaurants and specialty shops, so that was a better way for us to go. Anyway, of all livelihoods, cakemaking is about the most labor-intensive. And that was something we wanted. It made our baking what we call a ‘work practice,’ which is an extension of ‘Zen practice.’ We had some tough years getting started—years when we lived on broccoli and pasta—but in the last couple of years it has really taken off. Ben & Jerry’s was a godsend. Now we’re helping other spiritual communities find livelihoods. A couple of guys from a Trappist monastery were here a while ago. The Trappists have their eye on the cookie business.”



The bakery, like all commercial bakeries, suggested a normal kitchen on growth hormones. There were mixers, beaters, blenders, spatulas, and ovens, each about six times as big as the one you have at home. On a bulletin board we noticed an ad for *Restaurant News* alongside an announcement that a new Tibetan Buddhist dharma center was opening in San Francisco.

Two floors above the bakery is a large, undivided room, with exposed beams and black-cushioned mats, where the community practices za-zen. Za-zen is the center of Zen practice. It is sitting. People who are trying to be sympathetic to Zen sometimes say that za-zen is not *just* sitting but sitting as a form of meditation; Tetsugen Glassman explains to visitors that the point of Zen is to stop thinking of things as anything other than what they are—sitting is sitting. He is in his fifties and has bushy, impressive eyebrows and a fleshy, unascetic face; the only outward sign of his religious vocation was a monk’s jacket, which he wore loosely fastened over gray flannel trousers and a blue broadcloth shirt. There is some Brooklyn left in his voice, and there is some Kyoto in it, too.

“Zen practice reflects the teacher,” he said. “It tends to reflect the social tendencies of the culture that the Zen master is in. But Zen can also incorporate the aesthetic, if that’s part of the culture—like the Japanese tea ceremony. It can even incorporate the martial arts. Anyway, Zen in this country will pick up Western tendencies toward social engagement. That’s what we’re trying to do with the homeless program. It’s gotta be. And business, livelihood—that’s such an integral part of our culture. Zen is a synonym for life. Our mandala tries to harmonize meditation and livelihood and social action—to make them a model for living. And, since we find ourselves in Yonkers, Yonkers is a beautiful place to show the power of that model. Perhaps we’re part of some movement of— I don't know what to call them. Socially conscious confectioners? Ben and Jerry, for instance, have decided to give seven and a half per cent of their profits to social action. They're working on a new flavor just so they can find a way to use Brazil nuts, to discourage the Brazilians from tearing down more rain forest. They may call it Rain Forest Crunch. They're integrating their mandala, too, though they don't see themselves as practicing Zen. Zen is such a *practical* religion. It teaches us that each of us is gonna manifest who we are, and one of the things I am is a boy from Brooklyn. Enlightenment is the freedom to be active as who you are. And for me it's like this: enlightenment without livelihood isn't enough; social action without enlightenment isn't enough; but, if you do it right, selling cheesecake can become a vehicle between enlightenment and the world."



"Look, I watched Bush for his first hundred days and now I'm trying to take a nap, O.K.?"

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Nearly Remarkable

WHEN Lou Reed did a six-night gig at the St. James Theatre recently, it was not merely a sign of how hard it has become for even a house of Broadway legend, like the St. James, to find a bona-fide theatrical tenant, nor was it solely an indication of Lou Reed's mellowing as an aging legendary rock-and-roll reprobate. Actually, the paths of this theatre and that rocker had been crossing now for many years. Sort of.

Back in 1957, for example, the comic-strip musical "Li'l Abner" was beginning the first year of its run at the St. James when Lou, aged fourteen, released his first recording, "So Blue," on the Time label, with a high-school group called the Shades. The production running at the St. James on the evening of Lou Reed's birth (March 2, 1942) was a limited-engagement joint presentation of the Boston Comic Opera Company and the Kurt Jooss Ballet Dance Theatre. Almost exactly a year later, Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!" opened at the St. James, and it played on for twenty-two hundred and forty-eight performances, but this, in all likelihood, had little impact upon Lou Reed's infancy and preadolescence.

Very nearly remarkable, though, are the following congruities: In 1964, while Lou, in his last year at Syracuse University, was writing poetry for Delmore Schwartz, his mentor and drinking buddy, and playing guitar with various campus rock bands, "Hello, Dolly!" opened at the St. James. In 1965, around the time Lou was forming his seminal avant-garde rock-and-roll ensemble, the Velvet Underground, Ginger Rogers was replacing Carol Channing as the star of "Hello, Dolly!" Martha Raye was just stepping into Ginger Rogers' shoes at the St. James when Lou's first album with the band, "The Velvet Underground and Nico," was released—that was in March of 1967. And in mid-November of that year, just before Lou and the Velvets released their second album, "White Light / White Heat," the King of Hi De Ho, Cab Calloway, assumed the co-starring role of Horace Vandergelder, Dolly's romantic interest, at the St. James. In March of 1970, Ethel Merman took over the role of Dolly, and that August, after a performance at Max's Kansas City—some twenty-seven blocks south of the St. James and at least six avenues east—Lou Reed announced unexpectedly that he was quitting the Velvet Underground, a band that had made him something of a celebrity, though not nearly as famous as Dolly.

A souvenir stand in the lobby was selling Lou Reed headbands on the night we went to the St. James to see Lou, and much of the incoming audience was from a demographic group that today's hard-pressed Broadway producers would dearly love to see more of: a "thirtysomething" crowd, for the most part—older than your average rock-concertgoer but younger by far than most of Broadway's current ticket buyers. These people lingered in the lobby to smoke and drink just a little longer than your typical matinée ladies, but when Lou sauntered onstage, sometime after nine o'clock, they herded themselves toward their seats as politely as any theatre party. "Hello," a spotlit, leather-jacketed Lou murmured appreciatively to his fans. "Nice to see you."

Lou devoted the evening's entire

first act to his latest solo LP, "New York," spitting out the tunes on a stage set evocative of Forty-second Street, which is to say the 1989 boulevard of burnouts, and not the 1933 backstage musical: chain-link fence, "No Trespassing" sign, slashes of neon, all surrounding an oversized tenement-style window-casing that hung from the flies. It seemed more than a little stagy, what with Lou reading his lyrics from a music stand, but why not?

After a five-minute break, Lou returned to crank out a hits sampler set on an empty stage. The crowd roared, much the way other St. James crowds roared for Ray Bolger when he took his curtain calls in "Where's Charley?" after crooning "Once in Love with Amy"; the music throbbed, much the way Richard Rodgers' music for "The King and I" throbbed there, without electronic amplification, during that show's twelve hundred and forty-six St. James performances; and we could swear that the chandelier and the muraled walls of the St. James Theatre moaned just a little at the impact of Lou Reed's decibel levels. Could the sounds of sixty-two years at the St. James—the sounds of all the music played and all the voices raised in all those musical-comedy performances combined—ever be as loud as Lou Reed is right now, we found ourself wondering. Who cares, a louder voice seemed to holler in our head. And afterward, as we came out under the St. James marquee, which trumpeted on its Eighth Avenue face the arrival of "Lou Reed on Broadway" while still inviting all those who passed before its opposite face to "Come and Meet Those Dancing Feet" (the recently departed feet of David Merrick's "42nd Street"), only two things seemed certain: that Lou Reed was alive and well, thank you very much, and that the St. James Theatre was still standing, one way or another—like the quartet "on the corner" in Frank Loesser's "The Most Happy Fella," which never actually played the St. James but could have.

Disco-Towing

"IT can get very rough," a man in charge of information at the Department of Transportation told us on the phone when we called to ask if we could go out disco-towing. "There can be drugs and weapons. A ride to eternity. We can't guarantee your safety." We said we'd like to go anyway. Disco-towing, which was created in November of 1987 by the D.O.T.'s Bureau of Enforcement, is a program designed to clear away illegally parked cars near discothèques. At present, it's scheduled for Friday nights from 10 P.M. to 6 A.M., but there are plans to expand it to include most of the week.

We are in a brown Plymouth Reliant with Assistant Chief Catherine Mack, who supervises special projects for the Bureau and is in charge tonight, and Deputy Chief Al Tumielewicz, who handles parking control. Chief Tumielewicz has never disco-towed before and wants to observe the process, just as we do. (We also hope to learn how some people manage to park illegally and get away with it.) The disco-towing unit leaves the pound, which is on Pier 76, at Thirty-eighth Street, and drives down the West Side Highway. Two N.Y.P.D. squad cars lead the pack, which also includes four tow trucks (usually there are seven, but tonight we're light); Lieutenant Edward Wilkes, from the Bureau of Enforcement, who is second-in-command tonight, also in a brown Reliant; and the Reliant we're in. Chief Tumielewicz is driving. No one has a seat belt on.

It's a warm night. Chief Mack takes off a leather coat she has been wearing. Because she is management, she is not required to wear a uniform. In fact, if she wants a uniform she must buy one. Uniforms cost about five hundred dollars—for a summer and a winter version. Chief Mack would like a uniform, but not that much.

Chief Mack talks into her radio: "VT-5 to Super-7. Can I have a radio check?"

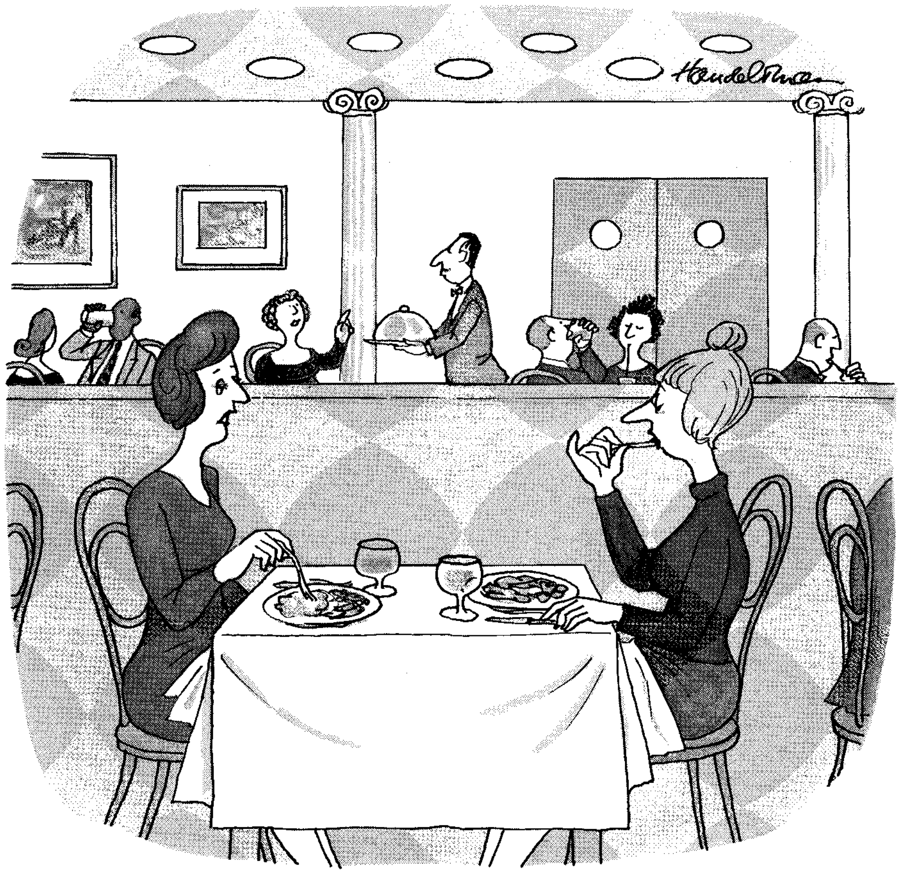
Wilkes obliges: "Five, four, three, two, one. K."

"5, 5, and 5," Chief Mack says.

"Super-7 to all towing units: our location is Macdougal and West 4."

A red Honda cuts in front of us, and then a blue Mustang. "The nuts are out tonight," says Chief Tumielewicz. He stops for a light, and loses the rest of the pack. "VT-5 to Super-7," Chief Mack says. "What is your location?"

"Bleecker and Hudson" is Wilkes' reply.



"I've deregulated Arthur, but he still doesn't run very efficiently."

"That's a 4." Chief Tumielewicz puts a flashing red light on top of the dashboard. The light's back panel is missing, so beams of light swing across the car interior every couple of seconds. Later, Chief Tumielewicz moves the light to the top of the car and drives right through a stoplight.

In a few minutes, we arrive on the scene. Chief Mack puts on some lipstick. "Just in case," she jokes. Two police vans have already blocked off the street, and police have tagged the illegally parked cars with summonses. Because Chief Tumielewicz is in charge of parking permits for the city, he is asked to inspect a medallion on the dashboard of a car which Wilkes thinks might be phony. It's real.

When one of the tow trucks arrives, Chief Mack walks over to a brand-new Mercedes illegally parked on Macdougal and asks the police why they haven't tagged it. Chief Tumielewicz says, "She wants that car. I can tell by the look on her face." It turns out that the police were fooled by a "permit" on the Mercedes which is actually a Lotto ticket.

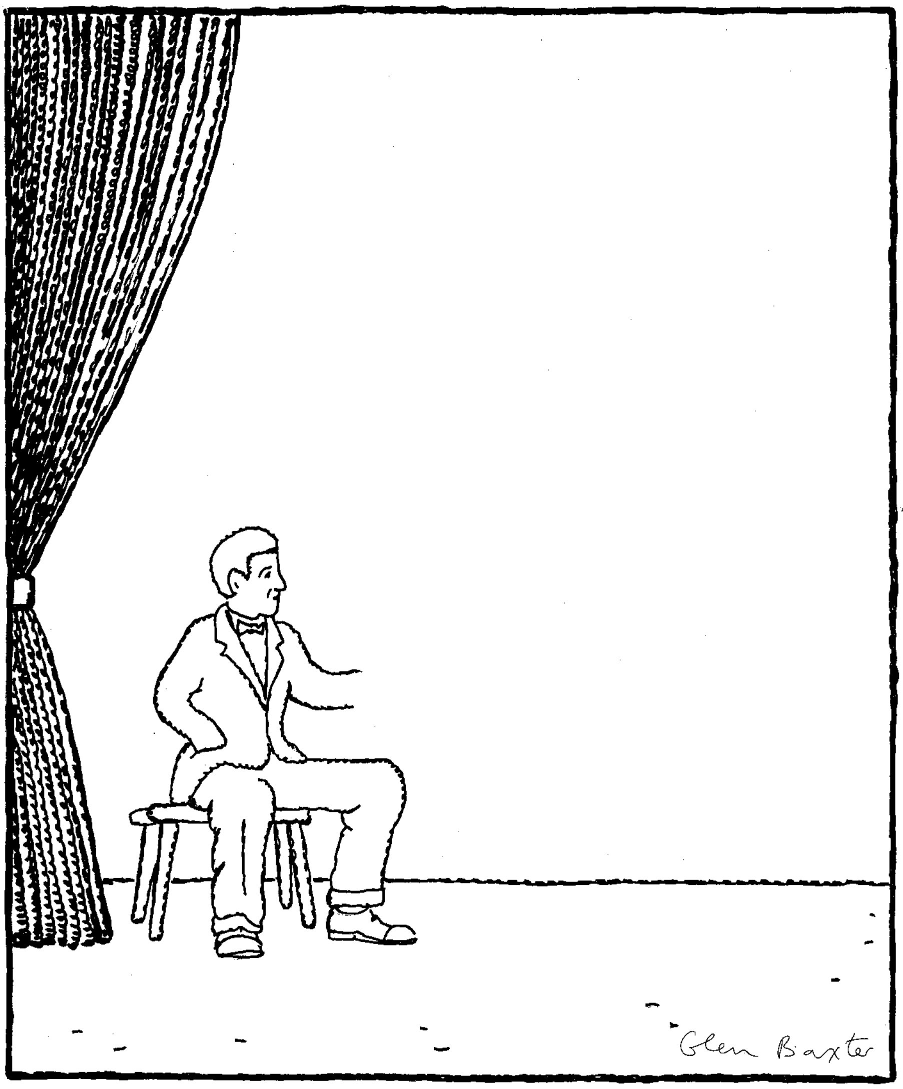
This is how a car is towed: The tow truck backs up so that a tire attached to its towing apparatus touches the car's front or rear bumper. (The tire protects the bumper from being scratched.) Two hooks on chains are fastened to the left and right sides of the frame under the car. Finally, the end of the car is electronically lifted a foot or so. A good tow-truck operator can hook up a car in about two minutes. Front towing is preferable, but sometimes another car is in the way, and then the truck has to approach from the rear.

"What if a car is wedged between cars front and back?" we ask one tow-truck operator.

"What *can* you do?" he says, shrugging.

(We make a note: "Park between two cars.")

Sometimes there is a problem with a crowd or with a "jumper"—a motorist who refuses to get out of his car. A tow-truck operator is not allowed to tow a car with a person or an animal in it. (We make another note: "Bring dog.") However, if a person or an animal will not get out of the car, the tow-truck operator is allowed to call the police or the A.S.P.C.A.



RALPH'S DISAPPEARING-WRISTWATCH TRICK STILL REQUIRED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF FINE-TUNING

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People will try anything to prevent their cars from being towed. They have offered money, they have claimed to be F.B.I. agents, and they have thrown themselves in front of their cars. Once a car has been hooked up, though, a tow-truck operator is not allowed to take the hooks off except for a very unusual reason. "Like the man is dying," one operator suggested. (We start to make a third note, but realize that there are some things we don't need reminders of.)

On a good night of disco-towing, ten cars per tow truck are hauled away. Tonight, at 4:45 A.M., the fortieth car is about to be hooked up—a Cadillac with a diplomatic license plate—when four men shouting in Spanish run out of Café Iguana. Chief Mack explains to the men that their car is in a No Standing 11 P.M. to 6 A.M. zone, and that if they had come out a few minutes later the car would have been towed. They nod but do not seem to understand. Then they drive away. That was as close as we came to trouble—no drugs, no weapons.

The tow trucks have cleared enough areas to call it a night, Chief Mack decides. "VT-5 to all towing units—we're pound bound," she says into the radio. A few minutes later, we hear, "T-190, we're 86 at 2-8 and 12."

We ask for a translation.

Chief Mack explains, "Utility trouble. One of the tow trucks is stalled. We'll have to tow."

ELEVATOR NEIGHBORS

The first time Jane saw Bim, she and I were standing at the table near the elevator, checking the mail. About a week, say, after I signed the latest lease. So for her, living here with me, that would have been a few days in.

I turned my head and raised my hand to wave, but Bim didn't see us because he walked out of the elevator looking straight ahead, going right outside—on his way, I suppose, to the grocery store.

When we got into the elevator and the doors closed, Jane asked, "So who's your friend?"

I said, "He's not so much a friend; he lives on Five."

"Just him?"

"He's taken."

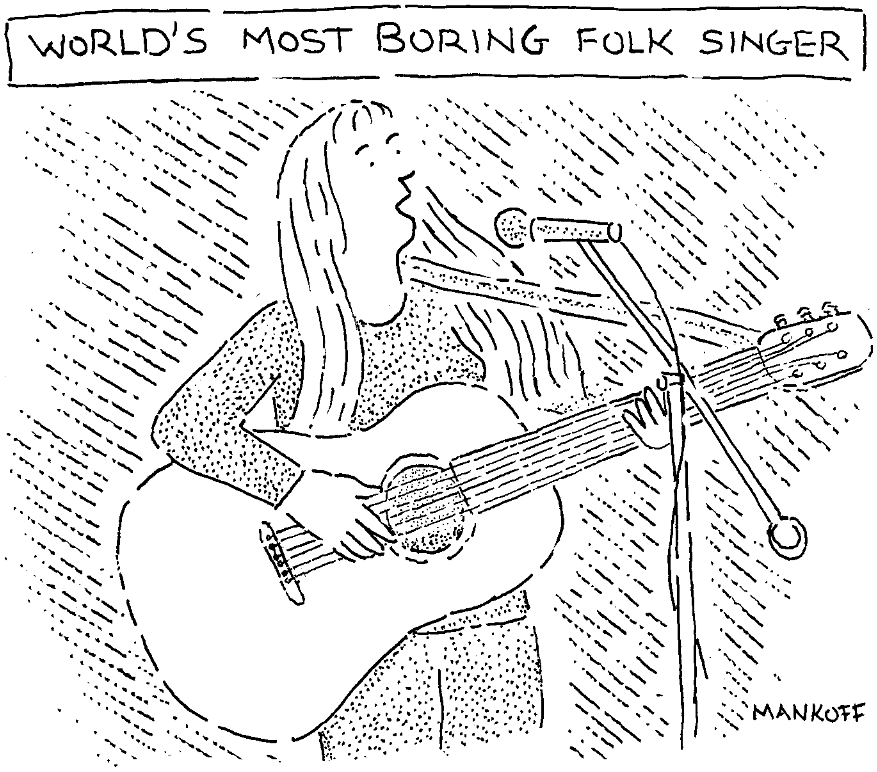
"But . . ." she said, smiling. "So were you."

I like the way it goes with Jane. I don't have to lie—I've never lied to her. And I don't have to tell the exact truth—that Bim's really, really taken. That it has to do with how he gets his information. So I just said, "Bim's not me," with the elevator rising.

Bim, almost any afternoon, down at the grocery store on the corner, buying tangerines: testing them between his thumb and fingers, deciding in his palm. One hand selects as many as the other hand can hold—three tangerines, or four, or five, depending on the size. He pays and steps out onto the sidewalk. Sliding the hand with the tangerines into his jacket pocket, he releases all but one: that tangerine, both hands help to peel. Then it's his selecting hand that separates a section and brings it to his lips as he walks away to work.

It's not that I follow Bim around all day, or spend much time thinking about what Bim does or why he does it, but since he lives on the floor below me I can't help seeing him a lot. And sometimes in the elevator, though Bim's not there, I'll see a tangerine that I figure must have fallen from his pocket when he was taking out his keys. I like tangerines O.K., so when this happens I pick it up, and as I walk along I peel and eat it—nothing special, at least not for me. I mean, I don't know what it is with Bim and tangerines, but it must be something.

Bim and Lily, they're on Five and I'm on Six. All the other tenants hate us because of the elevator thing. They call us the Elevator Neighbors, but it was the landlord, down on One, who set up this system, long before any of us moved in. When he converted this building from a factory, instead of installing a new elevator he just fixed the old one; then, thinking that with less use it might last longer, he sealed the elevator entrances to Two, Three, and Four. He left our floors alone: good fifth- and sixth-floor-walkup tenants might not be easy to find and keep. If anyone downstairs from us complains to him, he says that according to the law this building doesn't have to have an elevator at all.


WORLD'S MOST BORING FOLK SINGER
MANKOFF

"Ninety-nine bottles of beer on the wall, ninety-nine bottles of beer."

For a while, Bim and Lily tried letting the other tenants take heavy things up on the elevator into their place and then out and down the stairs, but it usually ended up being just as hard to move stuff down the stairs as up. And if anyone says anything to me about the elevator I just put it this way: "You think I like the landlord?"

I do like the landlord—him with his one-year leases, always thinking that the city's going to let the controls on rents expire. Then, with one-year leases, he wouldn't have to wait so long to raise the rents. But I like a one-year lease as against a two-year lease, because then I never have to stop and think if it's the year to sign a new lease or not. And because I always look forward to the day I sign the lease a one-year lease is twice as good as a two-year lease to me.

Bim and I moved into our floors at the same time. Bim alone, really alone, unlike me—I was just waiting to get settled before asking Sandra to move in.

The landlord actually gave Bim and me the same appointment to sign our leases. So that's where I first met Bim, in the landlord's office. There we were, both painters needing space to live and paint, signing leases with identical terms.

After shaking hands with the landlord, Bim and I went out and had a burger. Bim told me he worked five nights a week as a dinner chef and I felt bad to have to tell him that I'd started painting full time. But Bim already knew my work, because I was beginning to get shown in some galleries here and there. I hadn't seen any of Bim's paintings then, but I had a feeling that they were probably not much like mine, because when I told him I used mostly acrylic paints he said he used all oils.

"Your grandfather was a beautiful cat."

IT was five one-year leases ago, about six months in, at three in the morning, when Sandra woke me up, all worried. At first I thought it was smoke, because the air seemed heavy, but as I started to get more wide-awake I said to Sandra, "That's turpentine. I don't use it, but Bim might—he paints with oils." Though so much that it would come up through the floorboards? And in the middle of the night?

I pulled on some clothes, ran down the stairs to Bim's place, and knocked on the door: "You awake, Bim?" It wasn't long before Bim opened the door, a finger on his lips.

"I am, but she's not," he said, pointing over at the sofa. With the paintbrush in his other hand he motioned me in.

"So everything's O.K.? Sandra and I were wondering about the turpentine. We never noticed it before."

"Never painted all night before," said Bim, and I followed his eyes to a painting at the other end of the room, and then back to the sofa. Whoever she was, sleeping there in a sweatshirt and jeans, partly covered by a mohair blanket, she looked familiar.

"You don't know Lily?" he said. "You eat breakfast every day where she works."

But I didn't know her name, because she's second shift there, and I go in early. "Yeah," I said. "I see her coming in, having coffee with the busboys at the back before she starts."

"Ten to four-thirty. When I was having lunch in there today, I told her that if she'd come over to the place where I cook, I'd feed her dinner in the kitchen. So she comes straight from work and stays, watching, eating a little bit of this, of that—stays until I'm through. And then she says, 'Now that I've tasted your cooking, I want to see your painting.' So I brought her back here and dragged out a few paintings and she says, 'No, not your paintings. Your painting. *You* painting.' So she goes and stretches out on the sofa, and I start painting with her watching. Around midnight she falls asleep. So I just cover her up and then keep painting."

I looked again at Lily, sleeping, and then the other way, at the painting Bim was working on. I couldn't tell if what I was seeing was because of the lights Bim was using or if it was a way Bim had of painting light. "Bim," I said. "You buy some kind of special lights?"

"Nope," said Bim. "Just plain old lights."

I stayed a few more minutes. When I got back upstairs, Sandra asked me, "Turpentine?"

"Turpentine," I said.

And then she asked, "So what's going on down there?"

Later I thought about it—if what I answered was actually lying, because what could I really say about painting light like that, or painting all night, if I'd never done it? I suppose it would have been true to say, "Bim painting, Lily sleeping." But then Sandra would have asked me who Lily was. I mean, if you're introduced to someone when she's sleeping, what can you say about her? That she's just some waitress? That wouldn't sound right. So because of all that I lied. And because I'd never lied to her before, she didn't notice that first time.

So, sure, I knew I was lying when I said to Sandra, "Nothing."

THE morning after I met Lily, when I went for breakfast where she works I asked Karen, the waitress there who I'd known the longest, "Besides working here, what's Lily do?"

"Who knows? She never talks about anything like that."

"Do you think she paints?"

"Her face, a little. But don't you find her kind of bony?"

"Look, I just met her downstairs in my building last night."

"Then why didn't you ask her yourself?"

"I never like to ask—anyway, she was asleep."

"Then you should have asked Bim."

"You know Bim?"

"I *knew* Bim."

"O.K.," I said. "So maybe you don't like Lily."

"What I know about her is that she looks like her father."

"You know her father?"

"She was going through her wallet

one day and I asked her about a picture in it and she said it was her father. Same nice facial structure. Same eyebrows, same color hair. Then I started to wonder if I didn't know that anyway. Sometimes without ever seeing the mother or father you can tell which one the daughter looks like. And one more thing . . ." Then Karen surprised me. "Except for her moving a little too fast—in here, on her feet, got that? Making me look slow? I really don't mind Lily."

AFTER Lily moved in with Bim, the turpentine at night became a regular thing. Sandra wasn't bothered by it—things didn't seem to bother her when she knew what they were. But whenever I suggested to her that we invite Bim and Lily up she said she spent enough time, at the gallery where she worked, with artists who were cooks and, in restaurants where she ate, with waitresses who might or might not be artists. Me, I was becoming much less interested in just what else, if anything, Lily did, or whether Bim's painting would ever be in demand. I began to think that riding in the elevator with Bim and Lily, or either one of them, or even one of Bim's tangerines, might be one of the nicer things that could happen to me in a day. And maybe one of the nicer things that happened in a year was when I'd set up the lease-signing appointment on one of Bim's days off. After signing, Bim and I would go from the landlord's office to meet Lily after work and the three of us would go and have a burger somewhere. Once, just once, I got Sandra to meet us, too, but I ended up spending so much time trying to keep her from asking Lily exactly what it is she does, or had ever done, or planned to do, that I really lost the evening. And that made it like having a two-year lease.

Other than lease-signing days, the longest time I ever spent with Bim alone was when I drove him out to catch a plane when his mom got sick. As we walked through the airport, it seemed to me that every woman in the place was looking at us. But whenever I looked back at any of them I noticed that the angle of the gaze was never quite right, their eyes not meeting mine. A little higher, a little to the side—it was just Bim they were looking at. And there was Bim, looking only straight ahead, always seeming to take too much time before brushing the hair out of his eyes.

I almost walked right by him once because of the way he lets that hair just fall over his face. On days when I used to meet Sandra at work uptown, I'd go a little early and see what was doing at the Met. And I was walking up the steps outside when this hand with a tangerine pushes out at me. There's Bim, sitting, elbows on his knees.

"Hey," I said. "Any good shows in there?"

Bim, peeling the tangerine and handing me half: "I just came up to see a painting."

"Just one?"

I sat down and he told me which one, and he had to tell me where, because it was a painting I was only slightly familiar with. And nothing at all like anything that I or, I thought then, Bim would paint.

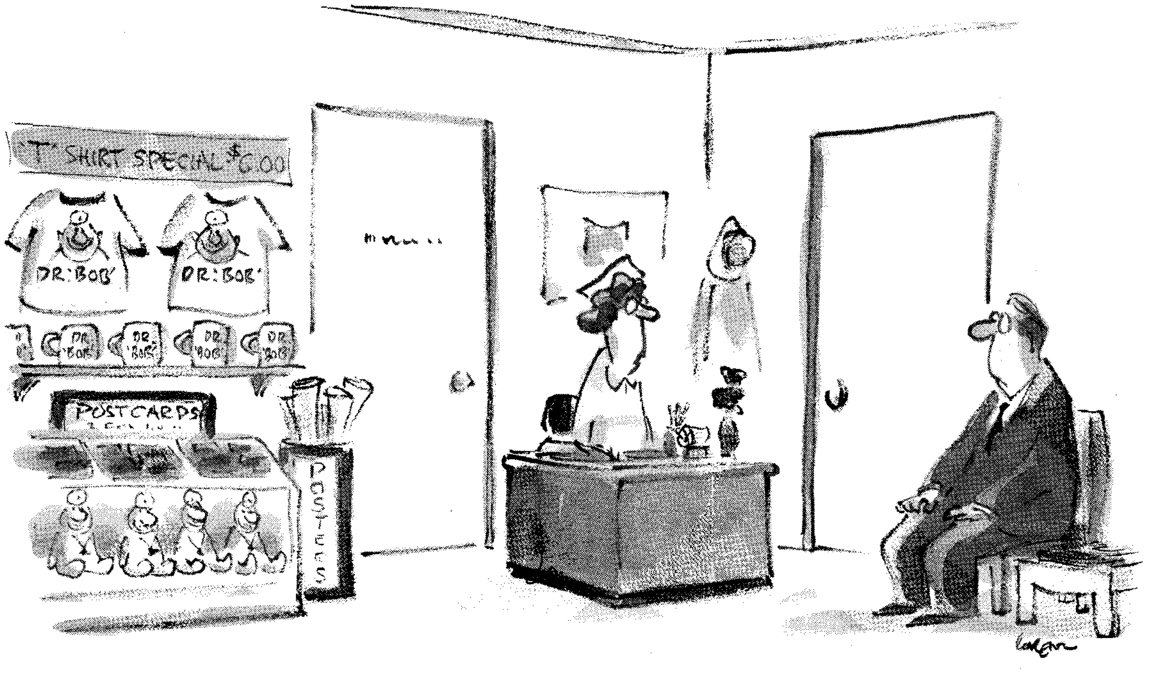
As I got up, I said, "Lease time coming round."

"O.K. Set it up," said Bim, bringing a section of tangerine to his lips.

When I got inside the museum, the first thing I went to, of course, was that painting. No, nothing like what either Bim or I would paint, not what's in it. But then I found myself trying to figure out the lighting in the room—until I remembered the last time I'd done that. And just like then, in Bim's place, it wasn't the room that was strangely lit.

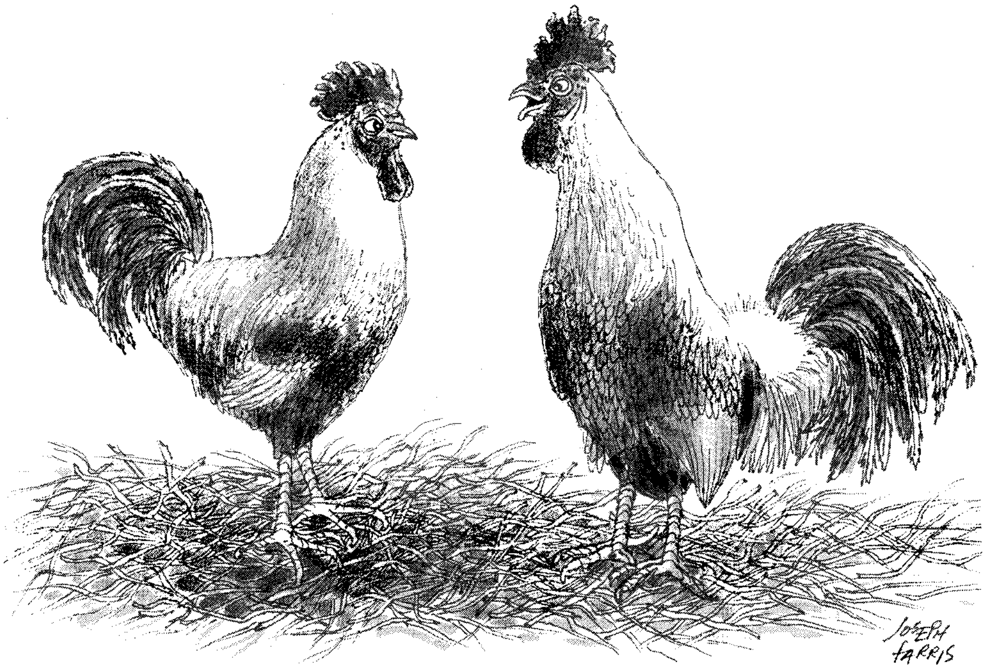
I'D always been so careful not to ask Lily questions that in almost four years I'd hardly talked to her at all. Over the yearly lease-signing burgers she'd mostly just listen to Bim and me. In the elevator it would be things like the weather, or I would just say hi when I saw her walking double-speed into work in the morning or just as fast afterward, to hang around where Bim was cooking. With Bim, on her days off, Lily had another, almost sideways way of walking: slower, and she'd face into him and talk and talk and talk. And he'd be walking, looking straight ahead, as usual, but nodding his head and smiling. I used to try to avoid them when I saw them like that, because I didn't want to interrupt. Then one time—it was just before Sandra left—they were walking and saw me and stopped to say hello. After a bit, I noticed Lily looking at my jacket—I was wearing an old khaki jacket. "Something you like about my jacket, Lily?" I guess that's the first question I'd ever asked her.

"Yes," she said. "It . . ." Then she



"Perhaps you'd like to visit our souvenir shop while you're waiting."

turned to Bim and said, as if I weren't there, "It softens him." And then, because I was there, she turned back to me. "It softens you."



"I'm quite fulfilled. I always wanted to be a chicken."

I'D started spending time with Jane just before Sandra moved out. It was about halfway between leases, and I thought, Let's see what happens. Let's wait six months—I can work here but sleep at Jane's place. And see if I feel I won't start lying as I lied to Sandra through all those one-year leases, starting with the first one, six months in. So even after Sandra left, it was a while before Jane moved in here with me.

I'd almost decided to give up this place, because I really should be thinking about buying something of my own. But when lease-signing time was coming around and Bim, as he did every year, said, "Set it up," I thought I might as well stay put for now.

The morning of the day we were going to sign the lease, I was sitting in the restaurant when Lily came in. I started thinking that, with Sandra gone, and with Jane still at her place and busy packing, instead of going out somewhere afterward why not take Bim and Lily back to my place, because they'd never been there. Rent a movie. Cook up something. And later I'd go over to Jane's.

I went to the back of the restaurant, where Lily was drinking coffee and listening to the busboys. When I told her my idea, she said they had some food that Bim had brought home from work the night before, and it could be like a picnic, but then she said, "Maybe hold off on the movie. Because Bim might not like a movie."

I said, "Bim and I could drop by the video place before we pick you up here. He could choose it."

"But he couldn't choose the frames."

"He . . ."

"Bim finds movies too full of things to see."

"Oh."

"Bim's very careful how he gets his information."

I was trying to think of something to say to make myself more comfortable. "Ted Williams," I said. "Ted Williams played baseball for the—"

"The Boston Red Sox," said Lily.

"Right, the Boston Red Sox. Ted Williams, when he was playing for the Red Sox, never saw a movie because he wanted to save his eyes for seeing the pitch." I looked at Lily. "But that's different."

Lily thought for a minute as she started to get ready for her shift. "Um, different, different, but not so different."

That night, after we'd finished eating and I was leaving to go to Jane's, I said, "Come on," and pointed to the elevator. "I'll let you out at your place. How often in this building do you get to take the elevator one floor down?"

At Five, I kept my hand on the button that holds the door open. I said to Bim, "Hey, this morning Lily was filling me in on Ted Williams and the Red Sox . . ."

Lily started laughing. She said, "My father must have thought I was the closest thing to a boy in our family. He wouldn't stop talking to me. And I loved to listen."

There'd be no one waiting to use the elevator. I kept my hand on the button and allowed myself a question. "So there's more like you at home, Lily?"

Lily looked at Bim.

"He wants to know about your sisters, Lily."

"Oh. Well, there's two of them, but they're really not so much like me. They're . . . they're like . . ."

"They're like each other," said Bim to Lily. And then he said it again, but to me. "They're like each other."

I used the hand that was holding the button to wave good night.

ANYWAY, it's late. Already, some nights, three months in, this happens.

"It's late," says Jane. "Honey, come to bed."

I turn off the VCR and in the dark, with open eyes, I get in bed. My hands know where I am and where they are, and you would think that whatever I'm then becoming part of would be enough to set aside that turpentine.

But that turpentine—if it starts to float up through the floorboards, I guess I start to float inside of it. Because the next thing I know, Jane has to say my name—my name, but as a question. And, so far, that's the only question that she asks because, by asking it, I'm back.

But what happens if Jane starts asking more than that? Not just in bed, but other times, when something makes me think of Bim painting light with Lily sleeping. Or Bim and tangerines. Or my khaki jacket. Sandra used to ask.

If Jane starts asking? I'll start lying. I'll say, "Nothing." If it's something.

—RICK ROFIHE

MR. REED'S HOUSE

MY brother and sister brought cardboard boxes home, and my mother began filling them with all the little things in the house—clothes, photographs, pots and pans. When I asked her why, she said, "Your daddy's coming home. We're moving."

I thought she meant that we were moving to get away from my daddy. I imagined my brother, who was fifteen, building a huge, windowed circus wagon out of lumber—a rolling house that would go right over fields and pastures and take the three of us across the countryside. This was East Texas. The cats would be in the wagon with us. I would leave the wagon to explore on my own, but I would always return and my brother would start up the motor and we'd just roll on to someplace else. We'd flatten barbed-wire fences, but they would spring back up behind us. At night we'd build a fire and roast hot dogs on long sticks for supper. My father would be out looking for us, but he'd never catch us.

He had been away four years. I had no genuine memory of him, but he had a shape in my mind. He was dark, and very large, and he walked stooped over, almost on all fours. He talked in roars and snarls. He had fingers that grabbed at you. His cheeks were hairy. He lived in dark corners of the house. I had cobbled all this from the way my mother and brother and sister talked about him.

"Do you think he's really sick?" my sister said now.

My mother said, "Oh, I imagine he is." They were wrapping newspapers around jars and packing them in a box.

"I bet he's not," my sister said. "I bet he's lying to them. He's a shirker. There won't be any money. He'll be around all the time."

"It won't last."

"What's shirker?" I said.

"Little Big Ears."

MY memories can't be true, but they are my memories:

My brother, with his rifle, closing the front door and turning out the lights, saying, "Sh-h-h, it may be him!"

My sister, practicing her voice lessons at the piano, suddenly slamming the lid against the keyboard and running to her room and closing the door.

My mother, out in the yard with an armload of wood, throwing the wood aside and grabbing an axe and standing by the well, waiting.

I don't know where these memories came from. It may be that something like these things happened but had nothing to do with my father.

HE had gone to Guam in 1947, when I was two. He was a construction worker; the island was being rebuilt after the war. He sent letters saying his work was "secret" and he couldn't talk about it. My mother assumed this meant he was constructing atom-bomb plants. One day as he and another man were guiding a girder into place, he began hemorrhaging—blood came out of his mouth. They got him to the infirmary, and later sent him home.

HE was in the yard. It was really him. My mother and brother and sister confused me by going out by the well and hugging him and laughing happily to see him. I lingered back on the screen porch.

"Where's that Teddy bear?"

"Come say hello to Daddy!" my sister called.

My brother came and fetched me to him. My father bent down and held me on his knee. He had short, hard whiskers on his cheeks, the way mean men did. His hair stuck straight out sideways off his head, and there was a bald, caved-in spot that looked as if something had hit his skull. He said, "Boy, how you been? Haven't seen you."

My mother and brother and sister, for all their earlier defiant talk about my father—years of talk, endless talk—had somehow become helpless.

I tried to squirm away, but he had a grip.

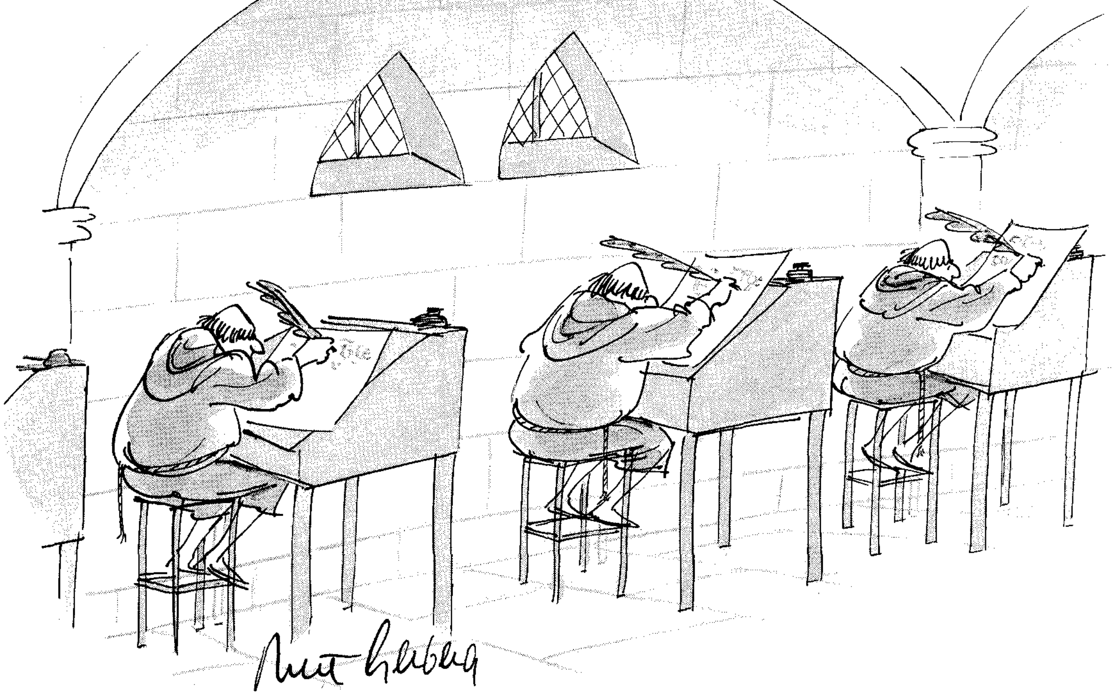
"He's wrought up," my mother said. "He'll be all right."

"I got something for you," he said. It was an air rifle.

THAT night, everybody stayed up late talking. I went to bed and lay there with the light on, listening to the voices. They were talking of things I knew nothing about. There was lots of laughter. Remember when this and remember when that. I hadn't been a part of any of it. They were another family.

"He talks funny," my father said. Now they were talking about me. "I thought you had that fixed." I'd

"Julian attended Columbia and Zabar's."



“ ‘Greetings in peace and love. This letter will bring you good luck. It has been around the world four times. Do not break the chain or you will have bad luck. Make 15 copies of . . .’ ”

been in the hospital the year before—an operation for an adenoidal growth.

“Oh, didn’t do a lick of good,” my mother said. “I knew it would be a waste of time.”

“Well, it helped him breathe,” my sister said.

“Didn’t help his talk.”

“Is that right?” my father said. “You mean he’ll always be a tongue-tie?”

Now they went back to the old days. On and on and on. I was still awake when my mother came to bed. My father would sleep on a cot out on the screen porch. Then I heard him yelling and cursing. Everybody jumped up and ran. He was standing in the kitchen. A strange animal had got into the house—some sort of vicious weasel. It had a long body and short legs, and it was brown. It was cornered by the kitchen door. “Stay out—he’s really mad,” my father said.

“I’ll get my rifle,” my brother said.

“No, just go around outside and open the door,” my father said. “We can get it out that way. Somebody get me a shovel.”

But when my father poked it the animal didn’t move. Then it began to attack the shovel, and my father had to whack it. He finally got it good. There was blood on the floor. I thought, I’m glad he killed it. I’m glad it’s dead. I don’t want wild animals in the house.

MY grandmother had given us a toaster while he was away. It was an ordinary toaster; you dropped the bread in a slot and pushed down the knob and the wires turned red and toasted the bread. My father had never seen a toaster like this. The next morning, he said, “How does this thing work? When do you put your butter on the bread? *Before* you put the bread in the toaster?”

If you did that, the butter would get all over the wires. How could somebody not see that?

He said, “Boy, you need to wash your face. Don’t you wash your face when you get up in the morning? They been letting you run wild around here. You’re just a ragamuffin. Your mama don’t mind you proper. Nobody minds you. I’ll put an end to that. Don’t you worry.”

WE moved that day. A man came with a pickup. My brother and the man lifted chairs, mattresses, and boxes while my father pointed at them. He said, “Here, let me help,” but my brother said no, he shouldn’t. When the truck was loaded, my brother and father and the man drove off. They did this several times.

I had my air rifle. It was a single-shot, and to cock it you broke it open like a shotgun. (Most BB guns cocked differently, with a lever, like my brother’s Winchester.) It was small, but even so I didn’t have enough strength to cock it. I just pretended to shoot BBs. I took it to the chicken house, but the chickens were gone. The cats were in there. They had never gone near the chicken house when the chickens were around. I went back to the house.

The handle of our drinking-water dipper was sticking out of a cardboard box. I was able to open the top of the box and pull the dipper out. I took it down to the creek beyond the well and scooped up water with it and poured it on the ground. The water would puddle in the sand for a second and then sink from sight. I tried to float the dipper like a boat, but the handle always dragged it under. Overhead, there were lots of clouds. I looked for faces in them. I found Aunt Susan and Snow Cup, a run-over kitten. I forgot that we were moving.

In the afternoon, my brother honked his horn till I came. “Let’s go,” he said. Everybody else had gone. I had thought I’d get to ride in the back of the pickup, but we took my brother’s old junk Chevrolet instead. I stood up in the rumble seat behind him while he drove. We went past the lake and the clay pit and through Horace, where all the houses were. I pointed my air rifle at people on the square.

Our house had been white. This house was dark gray. Our house had been back off the road. This house was right on the Palestine highway. It didn’t have a front porch—just some steps down to the road shoulder. We never used those steps or that front door. Not once.

My brother drove around the house to the back, where there was a garage. The house was at the edge of a huge pasture. Five or six tall white wooden boxes stood here and there. Far off, at the other edge of the pasture, some trees grew. The pasture wasn't overgrown, like the ones around our old house. It had been cut not long before. You could see scattered pieces of baling wire.

My mother and sister and father were already inside. Cartons were on the floor. The furniture was somebody else's. I didn't know where they'd taken all the furniture in the pickup. They must have hidden it in some secret place. These chairs, this couch were different. I didn't ask what happened to our furniture.

THE HIDING PLACE

The last time I saw it was 1968.
Paris, France. The time of the *disturbances*.
We had claims. Schools shut down.
Three million *workers* and *students* on strike.

Marches, sit-ins, helicopters, gas.
They stopped you at gunpoint asking for papers.

I spent eleven nights sleeping in the halls. Arguments. *Negotiations*.
Hurrying in the dawn looking for a certain leader,
I found his face above an open street fire.
No, he said, tell them *no concessions*.
His voice above the fire as if there were no fire—

language floating everywhere above the sleeping bodies;
and crates of fruit donated in secret;
and torn sheets (for tear gas) tossed down from shuttered windows;
and bread; and blankets, stolen from the firehouse.

The CRS (the government police) would swarm in around dawn
in small blue vans and round us up.
Once I watched the searchbeams play on some flames.
The flames push up into the corridor of light.

In the cell we were so crowded no one could sit or lean.
People peed on each other. I felt a girl
vomiting gently onto my back.
I found two Americans rounded up by chance,
their charter left that morning, they screamed, what were they going to do?

Later a man in a uniform came in with a stick.
He started beating here and there, found the girl in her eighth month.
He beat her frantically over and over.
He pummelled her belly. Screaming aren't you ashamed?

I remember the cell vividly,
but is it from a photograph? I think the shadows as I
see them still—the slatted brilliant bits

• •

In the excitement of being in a new house, I left the air rifle outside overnight. The next morning, my father called me out to the yard.

He was wearing three shirts and two pairs of khaki pants. I could see the collars and cuffs. The shirt on the bottom was blue, the shirt in the middle was yellow, and the shirt on top was brown. Huge gloves hid his hands. He was wearing a hat that seemed to have been made out of a screen door. The screen part covered his face; his eyes were hard to see. He pointed to the gun.

"You left this out. It might have rained."

I knew it hadn't rained.

"Just the dew would ruin it." He tried to tell me what rust was. Then he said, "You have it lucky. You have clothes to wear. You have food to eat. You have a BB gun. Not everybody has those things. In fact, there's a little nigger boy. He doesn't have any of those things."

He took the air rifle in his hands and studied it.

"That little nigger boy is a good boy. He takes care of things. Always obeys his folks. Whatever you've got, he deserves it more. But even so, he doesn't have a BB gun like you. He doesn't even have a house. He has nothing."

My father looked away from the house and pointed toward the trees at the edge of the pasture.

"He's over there right now. He saw how you left this gun out all night. He's thinking, That little white boy has all those things, but he don't take care of them."

He turned back to face me. "Look closer. He's there."

I didn't want to look closer.

"He's there. He's got a big shiny grin on his face. If you ever leave anything outdoors again, he knows he's going to get it. He's just waiting. He's got plenty of time. I've gone out and met with him. We've had conversations."

He handed me the air rifle, and I went back inside.

My mother said, "I want you to keep away from Mr. Reed's bees. They'll eat you if you go knocking on their door."

"What bees?"

"Those over there." She pointed to the white boxes in the pasture. "Thousands of bees live there."

"Thousands and thousands and thousands?"

"Yes."

I had never considered that bees might live in little wooden houses. I had seen lots of bees before, but they didn't seem to live anywhere. Mud daubers and wasps lived in nests; there were lots of snake doctors—dragonflies—living down by the lake. When I thought about it, it made sense that everything had a place to live.

I watched from a window while my father went out to the hives. The bees were Mr. Reed's. I began to suspect

against the wall—I think they're true—but are they from a photograph?
Do I see it from inside now—his hands, her face—or

is it from the news account?
The strangest part of getting out again was *streets*.
The light running down them.
Everything spilling whenever the wall breaks.
And the air—thick with dwellings—the air filled—doubled—
as if the open

had been made to render—
the open squeezed for space until the hollows spill out,
story upon story of them
starting to light up as I walked out.
How thick was the empty meant to be?
What were we finding in the air?

What were we meant to find?
I went home slowly, sat in my rented room.
Sat for a long time the window open,

watched the white gauze curtain sluff this way then that
a bit—
watched the air suck it out, push it back in. Lung
of the room with street cries in it. Watched until the lights
outside made it gold, pumping gently.
Was I meant to get up again? I was inside. The century clicked by.
The woman below called down *not to forget the*

loaf. Crackle of helicopters. Voice on a loudspeaker issuing
warnings.
They made agreements, we all returned to work.
The government fell but then it was all right again.
The man above the fire, listening to my question,

the red wool shirt he wore: where is it? who has it?
He looked straight back into the century: no concessions.
I took the message back.
The look in his eyes—shoving out—into the open—
expressionless with thought:
no—tell them *no*—

—JORIE GRAHAM

• •

that this wasn't our house: it was Mr. Reed's. He was just letting us borrow it. The furniture was his, too. The dishes and glasses. My father walked right up to a hive and bent over it. He had something that looked like a kettle or coffeepot in his hand. When he wanted it to, smoke would come out. Bees were all around. I thought they were going to eat him up—they seemed to drip off him, like honey—but he never twitched or jerked or shouted.

My sister was in one of the bedrooms. She was practicing her voice lessons without a piano. Her singing went up and down, up and down. There was a noise on the highway, and she stopped. "I can't sing next to trucks!"

My brother wasn't there. He was out somewhere in his car. Since the move, I had been paying pretty close attention to where everyone was, but not close enough. My brother had started the car and driven off, and I had missed it.

My mother was in the kitchen. When I went in to see her, she was looking, as I had been, at my father out the window.

"Mind those bees," she told me.

"I *know!*"

"You stay clear of them."

"Will the bees kill him?" I asked. Kill meant hurt.

"They won't kill him, I don't imagine. He's dressed right. But they might kill you."

"Would they eat me?"

"No, they won't eat you. They'll just kill you."

IN the living room, two of the boxes that my mother and sister had packed at the old house sat on the floor. I didn't know where the others were. I opened one. It was filled with photographs. One of them was very large. It showed a man wearing an Army uniform, standing in front of a tent that was taller than he was. "Who's this man, Mama?" I asked.

"That's not a man, that's a boy," she said. "That's Dennis. When I was in school, he was the captain of the R.O.T.C. You're going to be in R.O.T.C., too." I knew that I would be starting school soon. Every day I asked if it was time yet, and my mother would answer, "A few more days." Now it appeared that I would be going to stay in the tent with the man in the picture. "Dennis was my sweetheart," my mother said. "We went out for two years. He had a bicycle. He came over to study with me every night. Then, in senior year, he and his parents moved to Ohio, and I never heard from him again. I wished they hadn't. I wished I'd married him. Then he'd be your daddy."

This conversation recurred several times during my childhood. Each time, I grasped more of it. Eventually, I began to form my own picture of Dennis, and I began to rely on him. He would give me useful and specific advice. I came to believe that we all have ghost parents, the suitors our parents should have married, and that these parents are as real as any.

Later, when my father came back into the house, he took off some of his shirts and pants and sat down on a cot he had put up in a hallway. He was spending most of his time there.

That evening, as the sun went down, it became very murky inside the house. The light coming in through the windows from outside wasn't bright enough to really see by. I went over to a wall switch in the living room and turned on an electric light. It came on, but it seemed to make no difference—it was that time of day. Or maybe it was that house. I could hear my father talking in another room.

"What's he talking?" I asked my mother.

"Oh, he's just talking to the radio. He likes to do that."

I went into that other room. My

father was carrying on a conversation with the radio. It would talk and then he would talk back to it. He did this for several minutes. He noticed me. "You know, there's a little man inside there," he said. "And hear that laughing and clapping? Lots of little people in there, laughing at what the little man says and clapping their hands."

They didn't sound little. They sounded bigger than us. They couldn't be in there.

His tone changed. "That's Roy Rogers," he said. "King of the Cowboys." He listened some more. "It's Roy Rogers and Bob Hope. Together!"

They were in Texaco. Somebody sang a song.

"So he sings, too. I thought he was just a shoot-'em-up. He's a singer. I didn't know that." There was more talk—friendly talk—and laughing. Then my father said, "Oh, they made a picture together. We'll have to see it."

I DIDN'T like the house, but I kept close to it. I never left sight of it. This was just the opposite of the old house: I had liked that house, but I had often gone out of sight. With this new house, I didn't like it but I couldn't leave it. I wouldn't even go as far as the trees at the edge of the pasture, where the little nigger boy—as I called him then—was supposed to be. I thought, I could go over there if I wanted to, but I just don't want to. It would be scary, but I would be all right.

The garage was quite near the house. It had two wide doors in front that swung out, but they were too heavy for me to drag open. There was another door—an ordinary door—in the back. I almost didn't open it. I didn't know who might be in there. The garage didn't have any windows. The only light, when I finally went inside, came through that door. It made fluttering black shadows every time I moved. Cardboard boxes were stacked up everywhere, along with bedsteads, mattresses, and chairs. The boxes were filled with stuff from our old house. This was the secret place. There were boxes buried under boxes, boxes I couldn't get at. One box had some of my things: a tin truck, a stethoscope—things I had forgotten about. In the center of the floor, though, there were no boxes. The floor was cement; when I stepped on it barefoot, it was sticky—an oil spot. A huge lidded wooden chest sat against the wall. I lifted the top; the chest was filled with tools. These were Mr. Reed's tools. Some were like ice picks. Some were like pliers. Some were like hammers. More tools hung on the wall: saws, crowbars, a tire pump. Towing chains. A vise with a long lever was bolted to a workbench. I figured it out and cranked it shut.

When I stepped out in the sunshine, I could hardly see. I started sneezing. I didn't stop until I put my hands over my eyes.

MY father was at the kitchen table. The room smelled funny. He was sitting on the edge of a chair, studying the tabletop. "Look here at these ants," he said.

There were a bunch of ants on the table. I always liked to look at ants. They were all gathered inside a small circle. I thought the circle was made of ice water. My father said, "They were all playing here on this table. They were looking for food to take back to their ant hill. So I poured out this lighter fluid all around them. They should have stayed in their hole in the ground. Now they're in a trap." The lighter fluid was the funny smell.

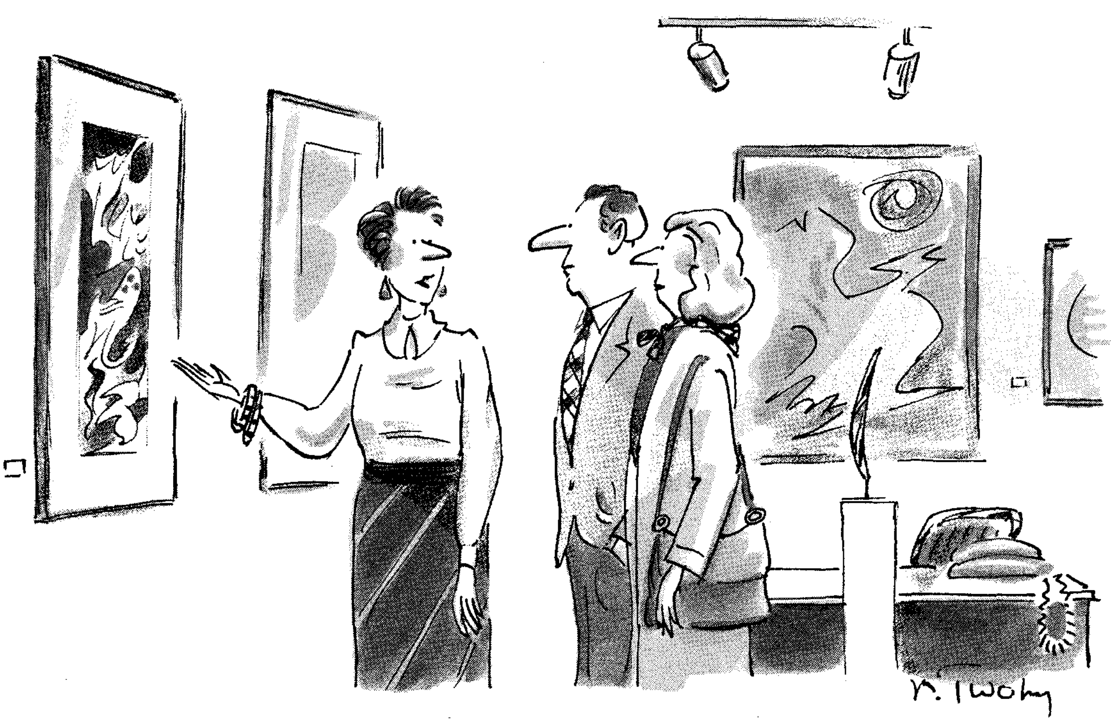
He took out his cigarette lighter, opened it and closed it, opened it and closed it, and put it away. "After a while they're bound to get hungry. Then I guess they'll try to eat each other. Got to eat something. Every creature's got to eat."

He always grinned when he talked this way. He chose his words carefully, slowly, and he smiled as he searched for them. It was a cross between a grin and a smirk. It always caused me, in my unease, to grin back.

MY mother had met him in Dallas while she was going to S.M.U. She lived at home, in Oak Cliff, and took the streetcar across the Trinity River every day. The house was on Jefferson Street. Next door was a boarding house. He lived there. He was from Shreveport. He didn't get along with his mother, and had gone off to Texas out of spite before finishing high school. There were lots of construction jobs. He worked on the big triple underpass in Dealey Plaza; one of its walls, my mother told me later, bore her initials and his inside a heart—he had carved them into the cement. (She told me

"Put your back into it!"

this the weekend of the Kennedy assassination.) He would come visit with her every night. They'd sit in the swing chair on the porch. He'd fall asleep, because he was so tired from work. When I was in high school, I asked her why she'd married him. She said that she hadn't wanted to marry him, that pressure from my grandmother, who liked my father at the time, had worn her down. I don't know if that was true. My mother also said, in explanation, "Oh, he talked a fine game. He was well read even if he wasn't educated. I didn't know the difference."



"You rarely see this kind of joy for under ten thousand."

• •

I WAS eating cereal. "Better learn how to hold a spoon right," he said. "In school, they'll give you a switching if you hold it how you're holding it now." So I would be going to school and not R.O.T.C. after all. "You only got a few weeks to learn. Say, can you tie your own shoes?" I hadn't worn shoes in months; I didn't wear them in warm weather. "We better get you some new shoes. And you better learn to tie them. Don't think your teachers will do that for you. Teachers are all mean. Do you know your ABCs?"

I said yes.

"Let's hear you say them."

"A! B! C!"

That was all I knew. I thought that was the whole alphabet.

I CAN'T remember their having an argument. My mother would sort of cry sometimes, or sniff a little, and he'd say, "Girl, what's bothering you? There's nothing I can do about it. Isn't that right, boy?" He'd smile at me. She never really fought him.

My sister did. My sister would yell at him and scream and call him things. One evening they had a big one. He didn't want her going out every night. He said, "You're too big for your britches since I went away."

She said, "You don't have any right to tell *anybody* what to do. You old *bastard*." He tried to grab her but she got away. Two days later, she went off to Oklahoma with a boyfriend and got married. She was sixteen.

One day soon after that my brother came home and said, "Where's my Winchester?"

My father said he had sold it.

My brother said, "That was *my* Winchester! I loaded watermelons all summer to pay for it!" He left home the next day. We later learned he'd lied about his age and joined the Navy. He was a big fifteen. Both of these departures occurred within a couple of weeks of our moving into Mr. Reed's house. I thought my sister should have taken me to live with her and her husband, but she didn't. I never even saw their house. When we learned where my brother was, I imagined being with him on the ocean. But what was really strange was the fact that they were suddenly, just like that, not there.

My mother told my father, "Well, you drove your own kids off."

"It was their doing. There's nothing I can do." He was sitting on a straight-backed chair in the kitchen. He always sat hunched over; he never held his head up straight; he seemed without shoulders.

WHEN my mother spoke of him to me years later, he became a cautionary figure. She would say, "Dreams. Dreams are all right up to a point, but you have to be careful." My father's dream had been to build airplanes. He never finished high school. In his twenties, working on construction jobs, he began to imagine himself as a genius designer. He said, "Fancy engineers at their desks—what do they know?" He began making sketches and balsa models. On Guam, apparently, his notions got out of hand; he began to talk about telephone calls from Grumman and Hughes Aircraft. Then his health broke and he came home. He told the family about the phone calls, showed them sketches. They just laughed at him. My brother, who was mechanically minded, had been the least respectful of all. He had said, "You have to go to college to be able to do this stuff."

My father showed the sketches to me. I saw lines on top of lines, curved lines and straight lines crossing and recrossing. It was hard to see how they were airplanes.

He said, "Want to know how planes fly? It's the Bernoulli effect. The top of the wing is curved. It takes the air longer to go over it than under it. That's what pulls it up. Now you know something. The Bernoulli effect. Can you say it back to me?"

I couldn't say it.

"Bernoulli. Burr new ye. You

can get this. Come on. Come on!"

I pretended to be looking at the lines on the paper.

"You don't have to say the word. Just tell me how it works. In *your* words. I'll say one thing. You sure better know this stuff when you get to that school. Know what I mean? Just try, that's all. God damn it, boy, don't not try."

I DIDN'T go to the woods. I could have—I was curious. I didn't believe what he had said about the little boy. I was sure he was just making that up. Or almost sure. With teasing, you could never be quite sure. Sometimes he would talk about himself as if he were somebody else talking about himself. "Just wonderful! What a surprise he turned out to be! Who would have known it!" Sometimes he would seem mean and other times cheerful. I couldn't get used to this. He was the first person I knew who was like that.

LATE one afternoon, my father put on his special clothes and went out to the bees. He wore his screen mask, and this time he wore the yellow shirt on top. He looked like a bee himself. He went up to one of the hives, opened a drawer, and just stood there. The bees didn't get on him much. He stood there a long time—so long that I stopped watching and began doing something else.

Later, I saw him back in the house, sitting on his cot. He had taken off his mask but not all his shirts and pairs of pants. I pointed this out to him.

"Come over here a minute," he said.

I walked over to him.

There must have been bottles, but I didn't see them. There must have been smells, but I didn't notice.

"You earned it, boy."

"What?"

"You've been getting away with too much for too long. You've been running wild."

I knew that was true. It had always been true. I had been getting away with things all the time.

He grabbed my shoulder, and pushed me across the bed. He pushed hard, and I went right through the window screen. I landed in the sand beside the highway, on top of a piece of the screen meshing. I wasn't hurt.

I ran back around toward the kitchen door to find my mother. She stepped out before I got there.

"I want you to keep quiet for me," she said. "Stay out here for a while."

BEHIND the house, the sky over the woods was all red and purple; it was what my mother liked to call a pink sundown.

Where were the cats? When we had moved, nobody had brought the cats. In the excitement of getting the BB gun, I hadn't remembered to ask about them. What about all my toys? Did they all get moved? Some of them I could account for. The tin truck, the stethoscope. But there were others that I hadn't seen since we left the old house: an Indian headband, a pair of chaps, Chinese checkers. What else? I could never remember them all. I should have put them all in a box myself while we were at the old house. Now it was too late. When you stopped thinking about something, it was as if it were gone forever. Cats, chickens, checkers pieces—there was no way to hold on to all these things at once.

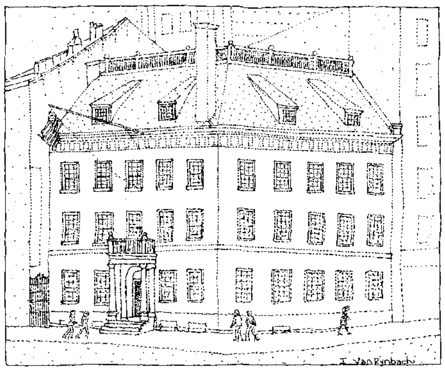
I picked up a rock and threw it toward one of the beehives. It fell short. I thought, If I hit it, the bees might all fly into the house and bite him. Then I thought, No, they might come after me.

From the back, between the beehives and the woods, the house looked dark. The color of gray, which was the color I knew the house to be, had become nearly black. As I faced it, all the light was behind me. A truck on the highway disappeared behind the house. When it reappeared, its headlights were on.

Within a few minutes it was so dark that I bumped into a beehive. It was warm. I heard buzzing, but no bees stung me.

I went back to the steps of the back porch and sat down. The steps, too, were warm. I could hear my mother and father talking inside.

"I'm going to drink it," he said.



"I don't care if you drink it."

"I'm going to pour it down my throat until I die. I am."

"Do as you please."

"Girl, I'm asking you for something," he said. I didn't know what he was asking for. I could hear him heaving and shaking. It sounded like somebody getting a whipping, or a dog pinned beneath a tractor tire. Then he began to suck deep air.

My mother came out on the porch and called my name. I answered.

"You're up late. I'll sit with you." She came over and knelt beside me on the steps.

"What was Daddy drinking?" I said.

"Lighter fluid."

"Will he die?" Die meant get snatched up. I didn't want that.

"I don't think so. We'll have to see. I doubt it. Oh, he'll be all right."

"What did he want?"

"He just wanted me to have him, that's all. To put up with him. But I won't have him. I thought I'd have to call the sheriff, but I guess not."

"He's staying here?" I meant with us.

"He'll go back to Dallas, I guess."

"To Grandma's?"

"Goodness, no. Deep Elm, more likely. He'll get a room somewhere. You know, a rooming house."

As she tried to explain it, I pictured him lying on a cot in a big dark building where every person had a different room, and every room had just one door. Every door had a lock, and every lock had a different key.

"Horace is over there. Now that it's good and dark you can make it out. That's the glare of the town. Can you see it?"

I saw it. It was all light-bulby.

She said, "That's from the houses in Horace. You know what?"

I didn't believe her. Houses couldn't make a glare like that. It was from behind the trees, from beyond the edge of the field, and it went halfway up the sky. I thought it was the little nigger boy. I thought he had turned into light.

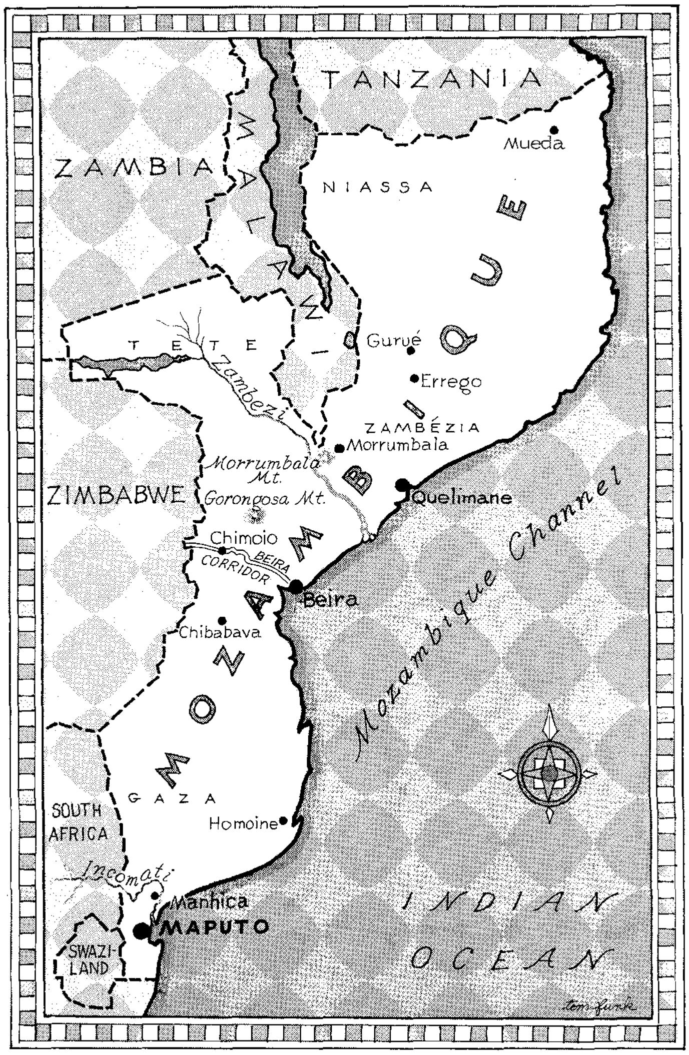
"What?"

"You and I can go live there. Right in town. I've got a job. I'm the new ticket agent at the bus station. I should have told you. We can't stay here. This house isn't ours. It doesn't belong to us."

"I *know!*" —JOHN BENNET

A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE EMERGENCY—I



MORRUMBALA MOUNTAIN stands at the crux of the long, languid Y that Mozambique describes along the southeast coast of Africa. The mountain rises nearly four thousand feet from the broad plains on the left bank of the Zambezi, perhaps a hundred and twenty-five miles from the great river's mouth. In the course of two months that I spent travelling around Mozambique recently, Morrumbala Mountain became for me a sort of lodestar, a persistent mirage at the heart of the country. I kept seeing it from different angles—first from the west, later from the north, still later from due south. In retrospect, it seems appropriate that I never actually reached the mountain itself, that I always had to content myself with regarding it from a distance.

The first time I saw Morrumbala Mountain, I was sitting in the remains of a tiny octagonal waiting room—its brick walls had been reduced by bazooka fire to bench height—alongside a grass airstrip near the southwestern border of the north-central province of Zambézia. It was late afternoon, and the clouds in the west had lifted, revealing the mountain's outline. Along with a couple of hundred other people, I was waiting for a plane. All around us was rolling miombo woodland, lush with acacia, cashew, and mango trees and punctuated here and there by sheer rock outcroppings that burst out of the ground like the bluffs in Chinese ink paintings. A light rain began to fall, and a little girl standing beside me whispered, "Calamidades." She was looking at the sky to the southeast. I looked. I saw nothing. Then other children began pointing in the same direction, all murmuring, "Calamidades." The little girl glanced at me, then looked away. Around her neck, I noticed, she wore a scrap of red felt on a string. Otherwise, she wore only a worn, shapeless piece of burlap. She was a beautiful child, but desperately thin, and she shivered in the cool rain.

"Calamidades" is Mozambican shorthand for the government's ponderously titled Department for the Prevention and Combat of Natural Calamities. The term has come to refer not only to the department itself but to the food and clothes it distributes, which were undoubtedly what those children at the airstrip were thinking of when, their senses sharpened by hunger, they spotted, or heard, the approaching plane—it was, in fact, bringing food. The natural calamities that have befallen Mozambique since the country won its independence from Portugal, in 1975, have included floods, cyclones, and, in the early nineteen-eighties, a prolonged drought that led to a famine in which an estimated hundred thousand people starved. The list of not so natural calamities must include Portuguese colonialism itself, which was of a peculiarly oppressive type, and also, paradoxically, the flight of nearly all the Portuguese colonists at independence, an abrupt decampment that left the country with a crippling shortage of skilled manpower. The greatest calamity, however, and the primary cause of the extraordinary, countrywide suffering that people in Mozambique now call simply "the emergency," is unquestionably the war being waged against the government by the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, or Renamo.

The government and many Mozambicans call Renamo *bandidos armados*, "armed bandits," but any suggestion that Renamo's operations are mere uncoördinated banditry would be misplaced. The war, which started in 1976 and intensified drastically after 1981, has destroyed the national economy, most of the country's transportation and communication systems, and much of rural society. According to recent estimates, more than six hundred thousand Mozambicans have died in the war, more than two million have been driven from their homes, and more than six million are currently facing severe food shortages; Mozambique's total population is fifteen million. In 1988, a senior American State Department official accused Renamo of perpetrating "one of the most brutal holocausts against ordinary human beings since World War II." Foreign news reports tend to refer to the conflict as a civil war, but the Mozambican government insists that it is a case of external aggression—that South Africa, its powerful, white-ruled

THE PEOPLE UPSTAIRS

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neighbor, is using Renamo as a proxy force.

Whatever it is called, it is a hard war to report on. Although people are dying in all of Mozambique's ten provinces, there is no front, and few pitched battles. The government releases information sporadically, usually long after the events described, and the only telephone number for Renamo with which I've ever had any success is in Washington, D.C. The only way to develop a real picture of the war, therefore, is by getting out close to it and asking questions. The collapse of the national transportation system makes even that difficult. Mozambique is twice the size of California. Most railway lines and highways are either destroyed or frequently attacked, so huge parts of the country are accessible only by air.

In Zambézia, which is the most populous province—it has an estimated three million residents—land travel is impossible except in the immediate vicinity of Quelimane, the provincial capital, and there are no intra-provincial commercial flights. Quelimane is a port city, and on my first afternoon there I tried to talk my way onto a coastal tramp I found loading grain at the docks, but the captain refused to tell me where he was bound, or even to confirm that he was the captain. I later learned that cargo boats in that area travel in fear of a Renamo ambush in the narrow coastal estuaries, and that I had failed to convince the captain that I was not an enemy agent.

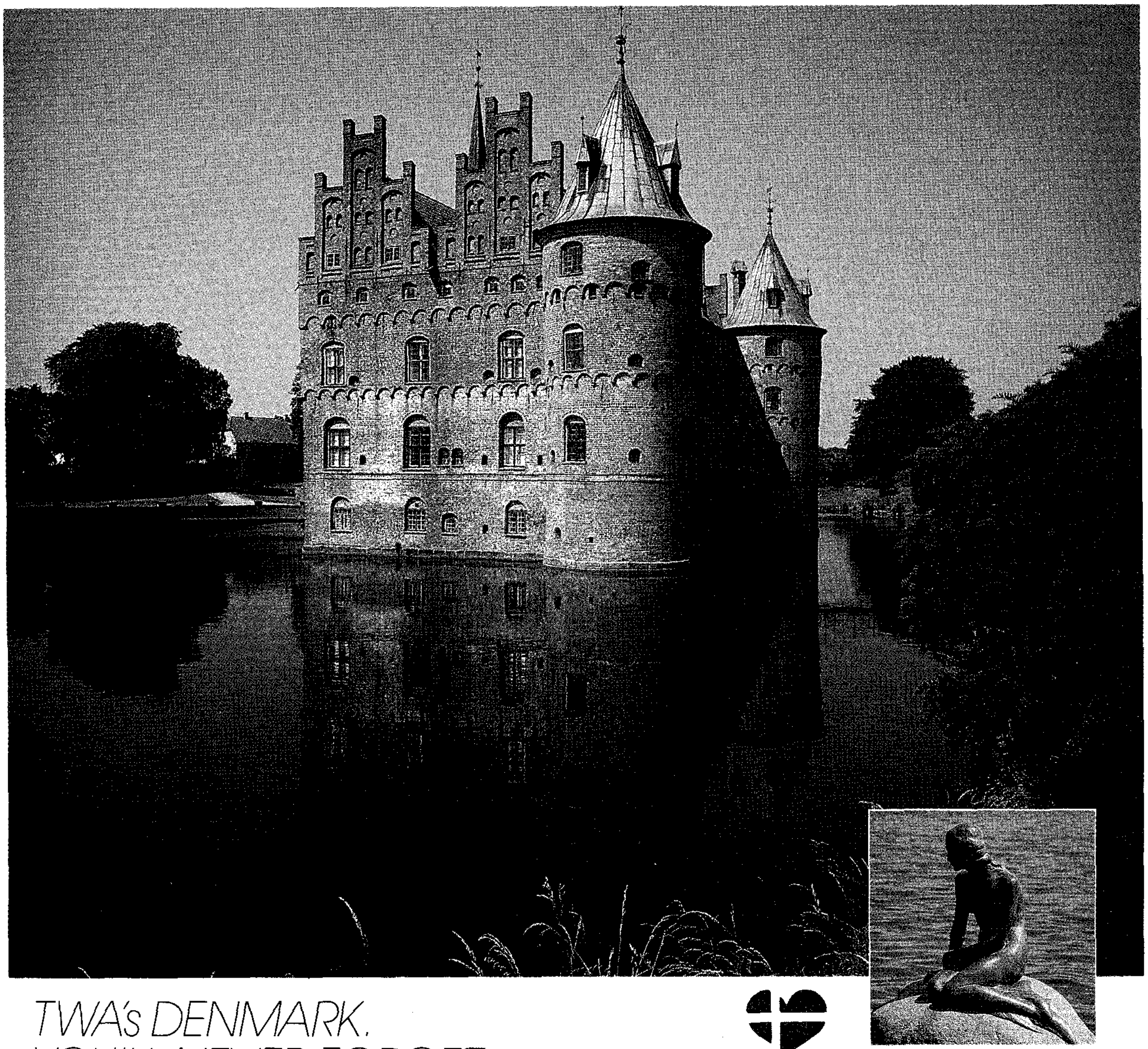
In the end, I got around Zambézia by hitching rides in a vintage twin-engine Dakota DC-3 that was hauling food to isolated areas as part of an emergency airlift. Millions of Mozambicans today survive only by the grace of international relief. The airlift in Zambézia was being financed that month by the Swedish government. The next month, it was hoped, the Italian government would pick up the tab.

The charter company that owned and operated the Dakota was itself a good indication of the desperation of the Mozambican government. The company, which was leasing its services to the national airlines, called itself Inter-Ocean Airways; I was told it was based in Guernsey, but it was clearly South African. The pilots were Afrikaners, and lived, they told me, "in the only place *to* live"—South Africa. Their names were Hennie and Ferdie, and they looked and talked like cartoon truck drivers: unshaven, overweight, profane. Hennie, who was in his thirties, flew in swim trunks, sandals, and a filthy T-shirt. Ferdie, who was older, wore aviator glasses and long sideburns. They both made no bones about their contempt for Mozambique, and how it confirmed their suspicions concerning majority rule in Africa, or about their motives for working there. "We're here for the money," each of them told me. They got paid according to the amount of time they spent in the air, so they flew their old plane hard, working from dawn to dusk, seven days a week, rarely stopping for more than the few minutes it took a ground crew to heave three tons of cargo aboard or throw it out on the ground.

Hennie and Ferdie didn't care where they flew. When I turned up at the airport in Quelimane with papers from the local authorities giving me permission to fly on the *cargueiro*, they happily rearranged their schedules for the following days so that they could go in the morning to a place that interested me, and return there to fetch me on the day's last flight. My being white may have had something to do with their helpfulness. I was travelling with two black Mozambicans—an interpreter and a young man from the local Calamidades office—but Hennie and Ferdie, who were gregarious with me, never spoke a word to either of my companions. The young man from Calamidades, whose name was Ismail, took to cowering around them, and timidly bumming cigarettes. The interpreter, who had come up with me from Maputo, the national capital, just took their measure and laughed. His name was Boaventura das Dividas. He worked with CARE International, an aid organization that helps Calamidades distribute relief supplies, so he had seen a lot of white people in action. Dividas looked about twenty-five, but he was in his mid-thirties, and was a man of wide experience. He had served in two armies, he spoke at least eight languages—including excellent English, which he had learned as a refugee in Ethiopia—and he owned a physical elegance that could not have contrasted more sharply with our pilots.

Hennie and Ferdie were unreceptive to ordinary Mozambicans' pleas for passage. Because of all the uprooting, there were tens of thousands of people in Zambézia who had been separated from their families, and because land

WE INVENTED ONCE UPON A TIME.



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travel had become impossible many of them collected at airstrips. The worst scene I witnessed occurred at a place that had not been reached by road for over a year. Several peasants had crowded into the back of the Dakota after it unloaded. Hennie spotted them just as he was about to take off for Quelimane. He stormed out of the cockpit and ordered the people off his plane. When they hesitated, he started picking up their bundles and throwing them out the open door. Everybody scuttled off except a rail-thin young man on crutches. He shrank back, but seemed unable to move. Hennie yelled, "Every minute we're on the ground is costing me four dollars and twenty-five cents!" Finally, he grabbed the young man's crutches away from him and hurled them out the door. The young man, whose legs were withered, fell to the floor. While Hennie jogged back toward the cockpit, the young man crawled to the door, and a dozen hands reached over the threshold and lifted him from the plane.

Hennie and Ferdie were, in fact, not allowed to carry passengers without government permission, and they did carry wounded soldiers when they found them, even without permission. After we got back to Quelimane that evening, Hennie told me that he blamed the government for not allowing him to carry hardship cases. "There's nothing wrong with the *people* in this country," he said. "It's the *management*." Hennie and Ferdie said they esteemed the Tanzanians who worked in the control tower at the Quelimane airport more than they did Mozambicans. "At least they speak the language," Ferdie said, meaning English. I wondered what Dividas, who was standing with us, made of that remark, but he just caught my eye, smiled wryly, and made no comment. Although both pilots had apparently been working for years in Mozambique, where the official language is Portuguese, neither seemed to speak more than a few words of it.

Hennie and Ferdie liked to fly either very low, skimming the trees in order to surprise and thus foil potential snipers, or above five thousand feet, out of the range of small-arms fire. They hadn't figured out what to do about surface-to-air missiles, however, because the missiles' range was greater and, as Hennie explained to me, "they're heat-seeking, and these pipes are hot." He indicated the Dakota's exhaust pipes. "We really should put guards on them." The Mozambican Army—usually known simply as Frelimo, for Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, the country's ruling party—had surface-to-air missiles, and the only two civilian aircraft shot down in the war had been shot down by Frelimo. Both of those incidents had been publicly regretted by the government, and stricter anti-aircraft guidelines had been issued afterward, but Renamo, too, had surface-to-air missiles—I had seen a news photograph of a Renamo fighter wielding one—so I was banking on the assessment of a British military journalist who reported that they apparently didn't know how to use them.

In any case, Hennie and Ferdie didn't know or care who was shooting at them. "You know what they say," Hennie told me. "Frelimo by day, Renamo by night." This little aperçu meant "They're all the same anyway" and "The government blames everything on Renamo—including its own Army's depredations," and it was, in fact, a common saying among some of the expatriates working in Mozambique.

The Dakota was a big, ponderous prewar plane that canted upward severely while it was on the ground. "Little Annie" was painted under the pilot's window, and Hennie and Ferdie didn't bother with a door—too much trouble to open and close. Inside, it felt like an old railroad locomotive. There were no seats outside the cockpit—just a big, filthy tarp on the floor. There was an axe, painted blue, on the back wall. My companions and I rode on fifty-kilogram sacks of yellow corn and pinto beans stamped with the message, in English, "Furnished by the People of the United States." Sometimes the sacks, of rough white plastic fibre, were covered with bugs, and we would get covered with bugs, too. Hennie and Ferdie said that bullets from the ground would go through one sack but not two—they had found bullets lodged in the second sack of a pile—so we rode on top of at least two sacks whenever we could. Hennie and Ferdie put steel plates under their seats for the same purpose. Ferdie showed me where

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14
DAYS

JUNE	JULY	AUG		
15	13	10	th	London, England
16	14	11	f	Amsterdam, Holland
17	15	12	s	sail
19	17	14	m	Flaam, Aurlandsfjord Gudvangen, Naeroyfjord
20	18	15	t	Kristiansund, Norway Cruise Inside Passage
21	19	16	w	Cross Arctic Circle Afternoon cruise of Holandsfjord with Svartisen Glacier Evening cruise the Raftsund
22	20	17	th	Gravdal, Norway
24	22	19	s	Hellesylt, Geirangerfjord Geiranger
25	23	20	su	Bergen, Norway
27	25	22	t	Oslo, Norway
28	26	23	w	sail
29	27	24	th	Copenhagen, Denmark

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1989 COPENHAGEN-BALTIC-LONDON

14
DAYS

JUNE	JULY		
29	27	th	Copenhagen, Denmark
JULY			
1	29	s	Helsinki, Finland
2	30	su	Leningrad, USSR
	AUG		
4	1	t	sail
5	2	w	Stockholm, Sweden
7	4	f	sail
8	5	s	Visby, Sweden
9	6	su	Ystad, Sweden
10	7	m	Cruise Kiel Canal Hamburg, Germany
11	8	t	sail
13	10	th	London, England

**Seabourn Suite—Type A $9,150*

1989 COPENHAGEN-NICE

15
DAYS

AUG	24	th	Copenhagen, Denmark
AUG	25	f	Kiel Canal transit
AUG	27	su	Jersey Island, United Kingdom
AUG	28	m	Bordeaux, France
AUG	30	w	sail
SEP	1	f	Lisbon, Portugal
SEP	2	s	sail
SEP	3	su	Malaga, Spain Motril, Spain
SEP	4	m	Ibiza, Spain
SEP	5	t	sail
SEP	6	w	Sète, France
SEP	7	th	Toulon, France
SEP	8	f	Nice, France

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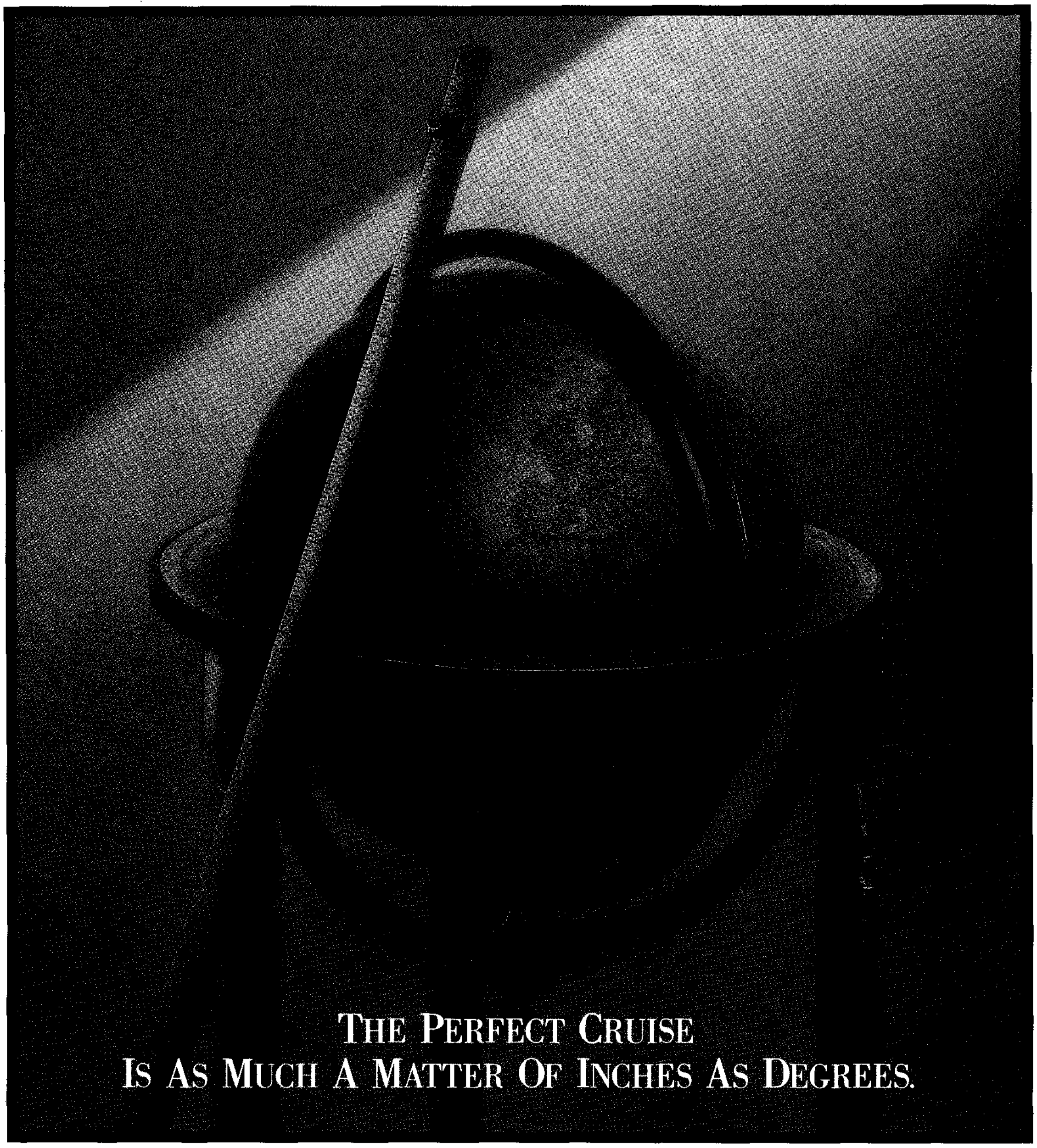

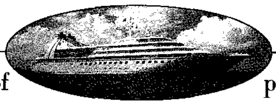

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the plane had taken two bullets just a month before I flew with them. One had severed a brake cable, causing them to land awkwardly; the other had missed a fuel tank by three inches. Those shots had been fired in the Ile district, in northern Zambézia. I flew to Ile with Hennie and Ferdie, and we came in high, then made a steep descent, trying to limit our time as a target. It was their first trip into Ile since getting shot there, but Hennie reckoned that it was fairly safe now. "I've had these boys on a diet," he said, meaning that Ile had received no food deliveries for a month. "They want to see a few loads get on the ground."

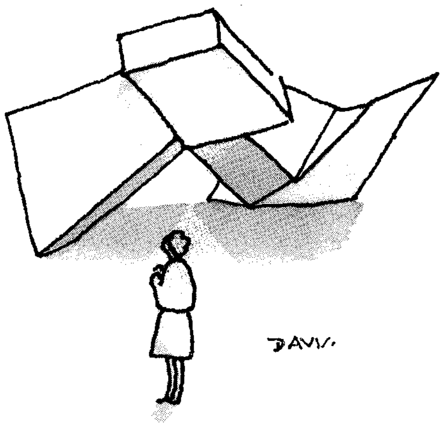
In flight, the Dakota seemed to swim through the air, swerving from side to side like a rudderless barge. A warm wind roared through the open door; the green countryside of Zambézia rambled past below. Zambézia is Mozambique's most fertile province. In peacetime, it is a cash-crop cornucopia of rice, maize, coconuts, cashews, cotton, and, in the northern hills, tea; more than half of Mozambique's exports come from Zambézia. But roughly half the people of Zambézia have fled their homes since 1981, and most of the land we flew over looked deserted. Fields were overgrown, and were swiftly reverting to bush. There were no herds of cattle—a stunning absence anywhere in southern Africa—and no herds of game. And yet flying over Zambézia was a constant all-points assault of intense visual beauty, with Maxfield Parrish thunderheads rising around the plane like immense, glowing marble pillars and, beneath us, glinting rivers running dark-green threads through a landscape out of Isak Dinesen. It was, in its wildness, ideal country for a guerrilla army. And yet it was scarcely thinkable that a Renamo operated in such scenery.

Hennie and Ferdie banked in for landings at terrifying angles, practically clipping the treetops with the plane's lower wing. When we came to a stop, one of them would jump out, run around to the front of the plane, and stand guard there, to prevent people from running into the propellers. The danger of someone's doing so became extreme whenever a sack of food burst during unloading. I saw crowds at airstrips go wild when even a small amount of corn spilled from a sack. Children, their hunger-bright eyes rolling, would scrabble madly after it, stuffing handfuls of dried grass and turf into blackened tin cans along with the kernels. Hennie and Ferdie had had close calls; they had seen miraculous broken-field running between the props by both children and adults. "It's my nightmare that someone will run into a prop someday," Ferdie told me. "We really should just turn off the engines, but it takes too long to cool them down and re-start them, and time for us is money."

THE town of Morrumbala, which is in southwestern Zambézia, about twenty miles east of Morrumbala Mountain, had been occupied by Renamo for nineteen months. Frelimo retook the town in April, 1987. This sequence of events sounded like a conventional war story, and that was one of the reasons I had wanted to visit the place. I also visited several other towns that had been occupied by Renamo, but Morrumbala was the first.

From a distance, jouncing in from the airstrip, it looked idyllic. The "cement town"—a term that is used in Mozambique to distinguish European-style settlements, which were once occupied primarily by the Portuguese colonists, from the African settlements, or "cane towns," that invariably abut them—covered two gentle hills with fifty or sixty substantial pastel-colored buildings. Neat columns of dark-green acacias flanked wide red-earth roads. As we drew closer, though, it became clear that Morrumbala had been sacked. All the houses, for instance, had lost their roofs. And when we reached the town itself the idea that anything like a conventional war had been fought there coughed once and died.

Every window, every window frame, every door, every doorframe, every piece of plumbing or wiring or flooring had been ripped out and carried away. Every piece of machinery that was well bolted down or was too heavy for a man to carry—water pumps, maize mills, the generator in the power station, the pumps outside the gas station—had been axed, shot, sledgehammered, stripped, or burned. Outside a bank, a safe, yellowing slowly in the sun, lay on its side, a gaping bazooka hole in its door. Some buildings were still identifiable from bas-relief signs carved in the masonry above their doors—"PADARIA" ("Bakery"), "CORREIO" ("Post Office"). Many buildings were scorched, and the burned wreckage of trucks, tractors, and cars littered empty lots. There were few signs of battle—only a spatter of bullet holes in walls and pillars—but a thousand relics of annihilative frenzy: each tile of a mosaic smashed, each pane of a glass-block wall painstakingly shattered. It was systematic, psychotically meticulous destruction. The only building in town with its roof untouched was the church. The only other structures intact were Morrumbala's two fountains. There was one fountain on each hill, and the northern fountain was faced with *azulejos*, blue-and-white Portuguese tiles. The scene depicted on it—painted, according to the legend, in Lisbon—showed a serene St. Anthony holding a cherubic white baby.



Morrumbala was the capital of an administrative district with a population estimated at two hundred and thirty thousand. At the time I visited, the town itself was home to roughly forty thousand people, over ninety per cent of whom were *deslocados*—displaced persons. There weren't many people around in the middle of the morning—nearly everyone was out in the fields working. Most of those I could see wore rags and looked ill-fed, but they did not seem to be starving. Except during the drought and famine of 1983-84, and in a few acute local crises, the scenes of mass hunger in Mozambique do not resemble the nightmare images that emanated from Ethiopia in 1984: bare hills carpeted with skeletal bodies. Most of Mozambique is not subject to cyclical drought and famine. War generates chronic shortages, and for Mozambican peasants displacement usually means a precarious diet of leaves and roots and, perhaps, wild game until they can reach a food-distribution

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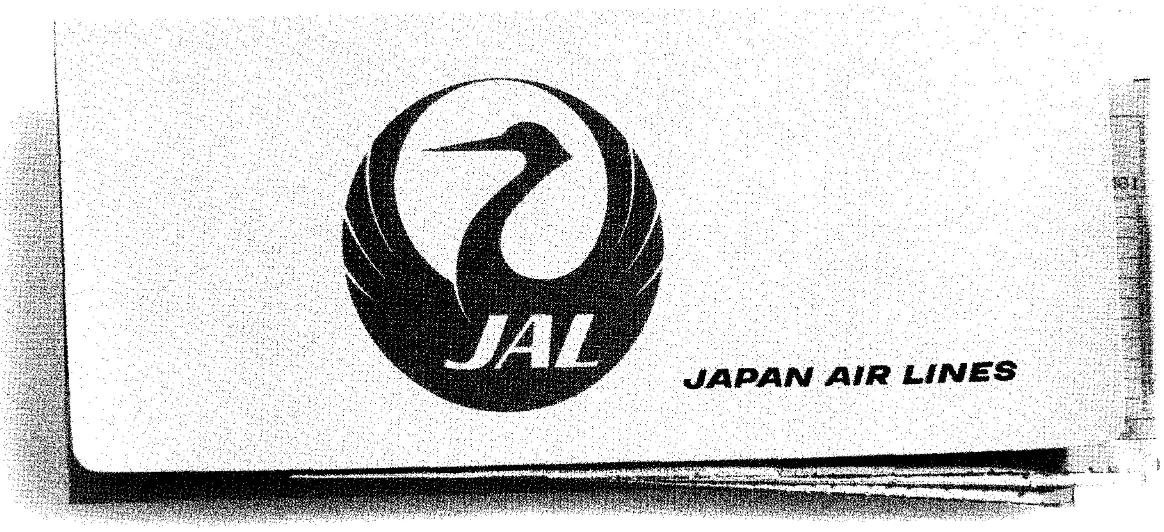

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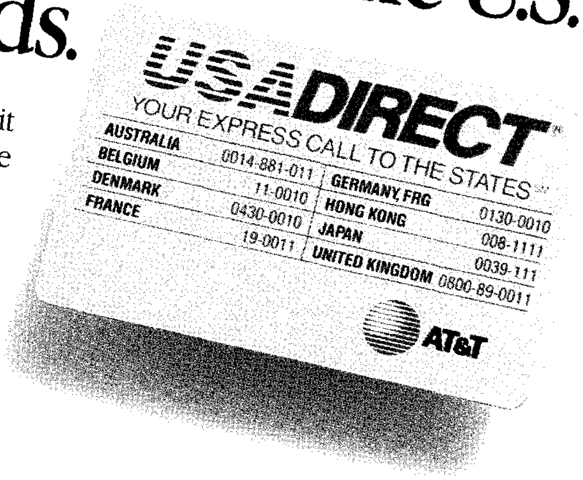
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All too often, the all-too-familiar term you see above means nothing more than a new label, a higher price, and for the most part, the same old product.

However, in the case of the 1990 Acura Integra, the term "new and improved" takes on a completely different meaning: new and improved.

Meaning that the Integra, an automobile that was named one of *Car and Driver's* Ten Best for 1987 and 1988,* has been completely redesigned for 1990. From front to rear, from top to bottom, inside and out.

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plain English, means that both the tachometer and speedometer needles will climb a little bit faster than you might be used to.

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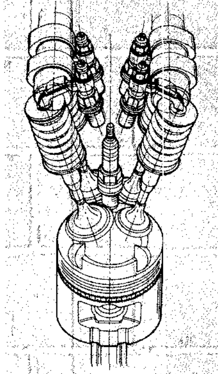

The four-valve-per-cylinder design of the Integra engine.

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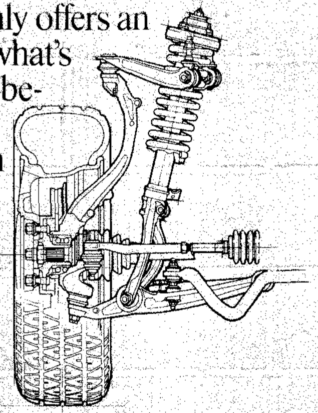

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center or can plant and harvest a crop.

The most pressing needs in Morrumbala, I was told, were for maize, seeds, hoes, and clothes. Maize was coming in by air—Hennie and Ferdie brought five loads of three tons each on the day I visited—along with occasional shipments of blankets and tools. But the last road traffic to reach the district from the outside world had been a military convoy ten months earlier. Another convoy had tried to reach it a few weeks before my visit but had been destroyed by Renamo on the highway in Mopeia, the next district south. Doctors from Medecins Sans Frontières and other relief organizations made flying visits, and UNICEF had brought in stocks of medicines.

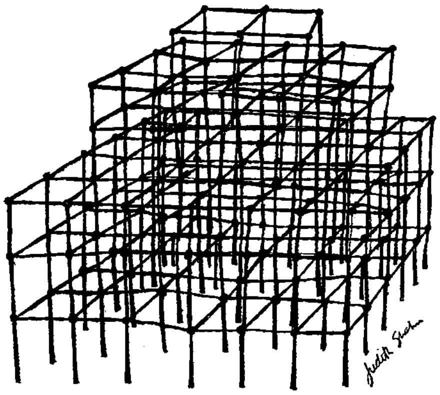
I saw UNICEF medicine stacked in a doorless room at the district hospital. For all I knew, it was being used, but it looked forgotten and ripe for stealing. The hospital was a rambling whitewashed building at the end of a tree-lined lane. It was getting a new roof of corrugated tin. The maternity ward, which had been burned out, was being used as a carpenters' workshop, but the rest of the hospital seemed strangely quiet. There were several male nurses, each of whom grew solemn when he saw me, but no patients except in the infirmary. The infirmary was a big, very dark room with a few mats strewn on the floor and a few people curled in the shadows. It felt like a storehouse for the doomed. In the hospital courtyard, fifty or sixty women and children were sitting in the dirt outside rudimentary grass tents. These were recently arrived *deslocados*. The children all had swollen bellies and looked seriously malnourished, but the hospital administrator assured me that they were healthy. They had been examined and vaccinated, and were now being fed. As soon as huts were ready, people would be issued cooking pots and blankets and moved to one of eight "accommodation centers" that ringed the town.

Behind the hospital, the cane town began. Small cane-and-mud huts covered the hills, and a surprising semblance of normal life was going on. Given seeds, a hoe, and the chance to cultivate a field without being attacked, a Mozambican peasant can work wonders. Morrumbala has fertile soil and gets good rainfall, so there were glistening vegetable gardens everywhere. But a close look at some of the new huts revealed an unusual small door at the back. I asked a woman who was pounding maize in a mortar about the door. She grimaced and said that it was for escaping in the event of an attack by the *bandidos armados*. Most of the people in Morrumbala had arrived there destitute and traumatized, but many seemed to have quickly reëstablished parts of their old lives. A spirited meeting was taking place under a tree—I was told that it was a divorce proceeding—and next to a new hut I saw an "African piano": fifteen panels of wood of graduated length lashed together and laid over a trench of graduated depth. A tap on a panel produced a rich, vibrating tone.

The troops now holding Morrumbala were Tanzanian; Mozambique receives security assistance from several of its neighbors, most notably Zimbabwe and Tanzania. The Tanzanian role in the war was supposed to be strictly defensive, and I noticed that the troops had built underground bunkers at each approach to the town. Gardens full of chard and tomatoes flourished beside the bunkers. Unlike any Mozambican soldiers I had seen, the Tanzanians wore complete uniforms, with pressed fatigues, smart red berets, and reflecting sunglasses. They laughed when I greeted them in English, and answered, "Good morning!" As in most of the places I went in Mozambique, nobody seemed inclined to question my movements.

Dividas chatted with the soldiers in Swahili, and afterward reported that, according to the Tanzanians, the "security zone" in Morrumbala extended only two or three kilometres from the center of town. In other words, any place farther out was subject to attack, even in the daytime.

I was interested in Renamo's occupation of Morrumbala. I first pictured it as a scene of rampaging *bandidos* shooting out the lights, swilling the contents of decent people's liquor cabinets, and sleeping in their feather beds. I was told by various people who had lived through it, however, that the town was deserted for the entire nineteen months of the occupation—Renamo commanders rightly believing that towns present fat targets for Frelimo air strikes. On the morning Renamo arrived, everyone, including a handful of Frelimo soldiers stationed in the town, ran off. The rebels spent two days destroying whatever could not be carried away, then rounded up every able-bodied person they could find, loaded them down with plunder, and marched them off to their bases in the bush. Most of the doors, windows, and zinc roofing sheets—each porter was required to carry two sheets—ended up in Malawi, a neighboring country whose southern tip is about forty miles from Morrumbala, and were traded there for soap, salt, gasoline, flashlight batteries, and sugar. Clothes, food, furniture, radios, motorcycles, and so on stayed at the bases. A major Renamo base was established in the Morrumbala district—I later met people who had been marched to the base from homes more than a hundred and fifty miles away—but the encampment closest to the town of Morrumbala was out near the airstrip. During their occupation, the rebels allowed no one to enter the town, and people told me that the grass in the center of town had grown as high as the walls of the buildings. Renamo dealt with the local population through *régulos*, petty chiefs who had once worked for the Portuguese, and *majubas*, local collaborators and enforcers. The Renamo commanders spoke Ndau—Ndaus are a small ethnic group from central Mozambique—and spirit mediums known as *curandeiros* or *feiticeiros* enjoyed great influence. When Frelimo, backed by Zimbabweans, returned to Morrumbala, Renamo made an orderly retreat. Thousands of *majubas* and porters left along with the fighters.



Frelimo had retaken Morrumbala sixteens months before, and reconstruction of the cement town had been slow. Some houses were inhabited again, but building materials were scarce. Reed mats covered the windows and the doorways, and all the new roofs were of thatch, which gave the cement houses it covered a disreputable, bad-toupee look. But the hospital was getting its tin roof, and a new diesel pump had water flowing in the fountains again. And school was in session: all over town we passed groups of children sitting on the ground under mango trees, some singing like robins, others listening to a teacher talk.

Much of the credit for Morrumbala's steady resumption of normal life belonged, I had been told, to Alcanji Nhampinga, the district administrator. On the morning I arrived, Nhampinga was just returning to Morrumbala, by light plane. He was a tall, lanky, studious-looking man of about forty, with a constant toothy smile and an air of profound preoccupation. He had been to Maputo, and wore a clean gray three-piece suit, but at the airstrip he climbed straight into the back of a truck that was waiting there. We rode into town together. The truck, Nhampinga explained, was one of only two working civilian vehicles in the district, and the other was a motorcycle. "This truck was a gift from the Japanese," he said. "It came with the last convoy. It broke down here in Morrumbala, and was left behind." Nhampinga grinned guiltily. A good trick, I thought. "We repaired it, but one of its batteries is dead now, and there are no spare parts or tools. We start it by touching two wires together." The truck's health was clearly one of Nhampinga's numberless preoccupations.

When we reached his house, which was one of the bigger thatched buildings (half of it had been turned into a military command post, government administrators and their families being a favorite Renamo target), Nhampinga found a group of his assistants waiting. He made a short, quiet speech to them in Chuabo, the local language; heard a report on what had been happening in his absence; then apologized profusely to me, in Portuguese, for his inability to show me around—there were some things he just had to attend to.

It was several hours before we saw Nhampinga again. By then, his coat and vest and round-framed glasses were gone, his sleeves were rolled up, and there was a smear of red mud on one shoulder of his shirt, but he was still smiling, still distracted, and still apologizing. His wife had given us lunch—bean soup and a chicken stew—in their dark, bare house, and Nhampinga apologized for having been absent. But he was still determined to show me at least one thing: his generator. It had been built by the best mechanic in Morrumbala, from parts cannibalized from the remains of many different machines. They hadn't been able to find a flywheel, so he had milled one out of wood. I thought the generator looked great, sitting burly and immaculate in a cement shelter in the administrator's back yard. The wiring to the house was finished. The Nhampingas' was going to be the first house in town to get electricity in the post-Renamo period. All they needed now was two batteries. I asked when the batteries would come. Nhampinga shrugged, embarrassed. It was a question of money, he said. I recalled that a district administrator's monthly salary came to about fifty dollars. This is a fair measure of Mozambique's poverty: Nhampinga was, after all, the most powerful man in a district of two hundred and thirty thousand people.

BUT the depths of dispossession have a million levels, and in a place like Morrumbala the lowest levels are occupied by the most recently arrived. In a cement-walled yard behind the ruins of a bank, under a cashew tree at the edge of a tomato patch, I found Alexandre Namanyanga, his wife, Dshassa, and their four children. They were *deslocados* who had arrived that same morning. The Namanyangas were in bad shape. All the children were extremely thin, and at least one of them seemed dangerously listless. The family had no clothes at all; they covered themselves as best they could with tree bark. I couldn't imagine what they made of me, but Dividas and I sat talking with the Namanyangas for an hour or so. Mr. Namanyanga was a small, good-looking man with calm, intelligent eyes and a wispy beard. He did most of the talking. His wife was also quite alert, though she and the children were obviously frightened. The whole family shivered the whole time we talked, all having caught a chill, they explained, while walking in the bush the night before.

Mr. Namanyanga, speaking in Sena, a local language, said that he and his wife had lived as peasants near the Minduru Mission, not far from Morrumbala, until six or seven years before. Then the war came to their area, and, though they saw no violence themselves, he said, they fled. They

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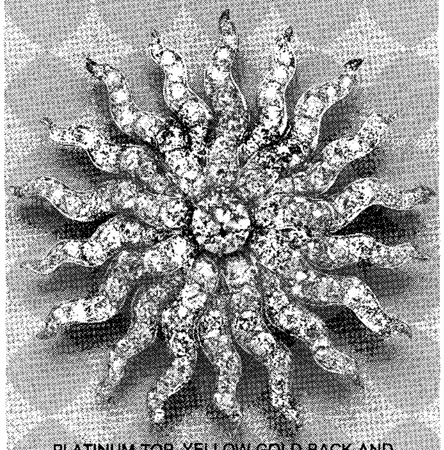

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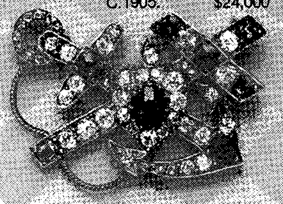

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settled in an area that he called Tandekia. I got out my Michelin map—which, I noticed, still listed Morrumbala, somewhat surreally, as a town with an "equipped" camping site—but Mr. Namanyanga could not show me, even generally, where Tandekia was. He said he had once gone to school for two years but had since forgotten how to read. Mrs. Namanyanga said she had gone to school for four years, but she, too, had forgotten how to read. After further discussion, it turned out that Tandekia was the name of the chief in that area, and possibly not an official place-name at all. The Namanyangas were allowed to farm there, in any case, and their three younger children had been born there. The big problem in Tandekia had been lack of clothes: the Namanyangas had been wearing nothing but tree bark for the last six years. When her husband murmured this information, Mrs. Namanyanga pulled self-consciously at her rough reddish skirt and glanced at my leather-sided running shoes.

Tandekia sounded to me like Renamo territory, but the Namanyangas, after discussing the matter, could not tell me whether Tandekia, the chief, was with Renamo or Frelimo. I suggested some ways that they might be able to tell the difference—if they ever saw, say, a Mozambican flag, or a Frelimo soldier, or a working motor vehicle in the area, that would suggest that it was government-held territory—and they seemed to want to oblige me with a definite answer. But they said they had never seen any of those things. The fact that they and their children were so thin made me wonder if armed men had been taking away the food they grew, but they said they had seen no armed men. They had started hearing shooting in the distance, however, and that was why they had fled Tandekia. They said they understood that Morrumbala was a government-held town; indeed, that was why they had come there—they had heard the government had food. But they could not tell me, when I asked, who the President of Mozambique was. (It's Joaquim Alberto Chissano.) Mozambique itself seemed to be a fairly hazy idea to the Namanyangas. This was not some sort of African know-nothingism, I was convinced—and Dividas agreed—but sheer lack of information. The Namanyangas had simply not heard much—if anything at all—about the modern nation-state in which they officially lived.

Among the dozens of *deslocados* I talked to in Mozambique, the Namanyangas were neither typical nor extraordinary. Many people in their situation did not know who the President of Mozambique was, while plenty of others did. Those who could read and write and speak Portuguese (this describes far less than half of all Mozambicans) naturally tended to know more about the greater world than those who lacked these skills. Most people could say whether they had been living under a Frelimo or a Renamo administration at their last address, and some could tell me far more about their experiences than the Namanyangas did, but every "interview" of this sort was utterly problematic.

Many people seemed to figure that the safest attitude to assume with me was a hear-no-evil, see-no-evil shrug, almost as if to say "What war?" (The

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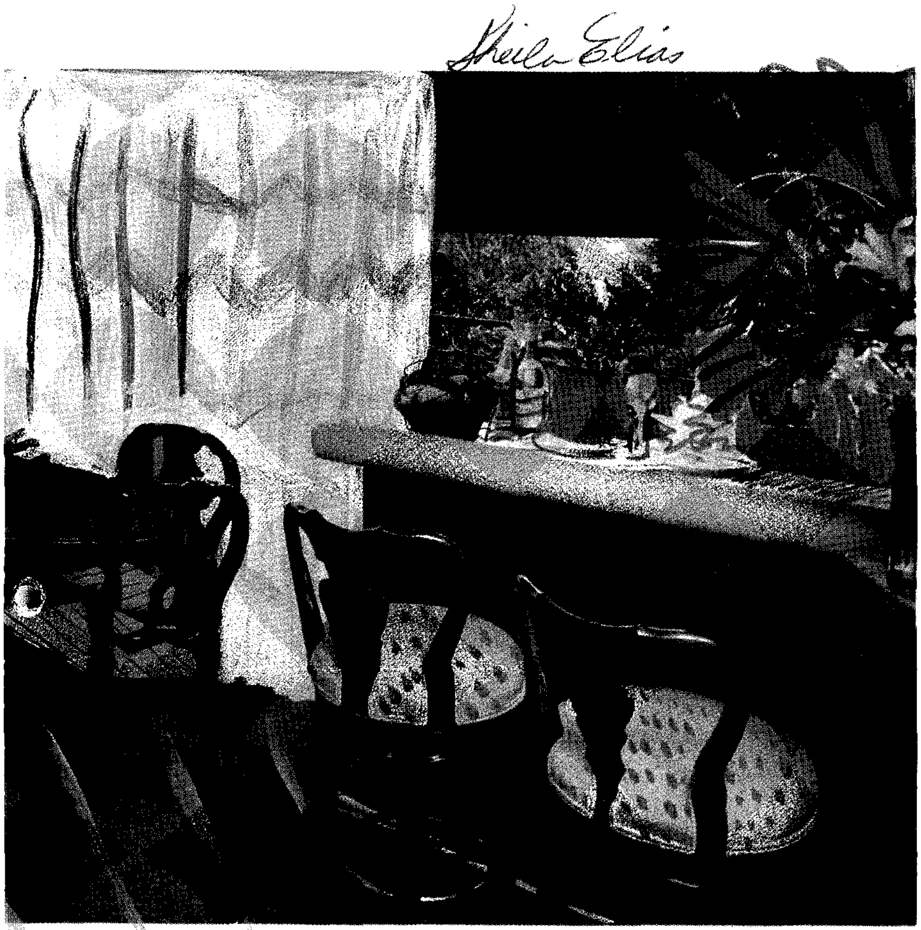
Namanyangas may have been doing some of this.) The nature of the war—a conflict in which most attacks occur at night, neither side has a regular uniform, and Renamo's forces are reported to include many semi-independent bands (and have spawned at least one breakaway army)—only increased the difficulty of establishing precisely what had happened to anyone. Also working against people's willingness to tell me their war stories, of course, was the natural reluctance to recall traumatic events, particularly fresh traumas to one's own family or friends.

The interpreter could make a big difference. Dividas was superb at reassuring people, questioning them gently, and, when necessary, giving me advice. I employed other interpreters who shouted at people, and who even refused to translate what they said—"She's lying," one man in Malawi kept insisting. In Mozambique, local officials were usually willing to let me interview people privately, but if the people spoke only an obscure language it was sometimes necessary to use a second interpreter, and the choice was again critical. Dividas would delay things for as long as it took him to find a local interpreter whom he reckoned our interviewees would not find intimidating. But with all these forces swirling underneath these already stilted conversations, the facts in the narratives we elicited rarely felt entirely stable.

And yet the world itself could not have felt very stable to people like the Namanyangas. While we talked, the place where we sat seemed to me perfectly solid and secure; the world was still on its axis. For refugees, and especially for peasants driven off their land, however, the world is decidedly *not* on its axis. Their homes and all that accompanies that fundamental notion—kin, society, sustenance, identity itself—have been torn from them by terrifying forces. To the Namanyangas the town of Morrumbala did not, I imagine, look the least bit secure. I wondered if they would be willing to send their children to school. Many *deslocados* were not, for they had learned the hard way that it was dangerous to let their children out of their sight. If there was an attack, they wanted to be able to grab their kids as they ran. And who could promise the Namanyangas that the war would not sweep across Morrumbala again at any moment?

Weeks later, across the border in Malawi, I talked to a man who had once returned to Morrumbala too soon. He was a forty-nine-year-old refugee named Orlando Passanjezi Galave. Mr. Galave was a *mutilado*—his left hand, his right ear, his lips, and his nose had been hacked off. I first noticed him—he was hard to miss—while I was walking through a dusty yard where several dozen newly arrived refugees were waiting for food and medical attention, and several hundred others, also Mozambican refugees but of longer standing, were intrepidly gathering for a bus trip back to parts of Mozambique that they had been assured were now secure. The two groups seemed to be ignoring each other, perhaps understandably. I stopped and asked Galave, who was there greeting the new arrivals, where he came from, and when he said, "Morrumbala," slurring the words around his permanently bared teeth, I asked if he would mind telling me his



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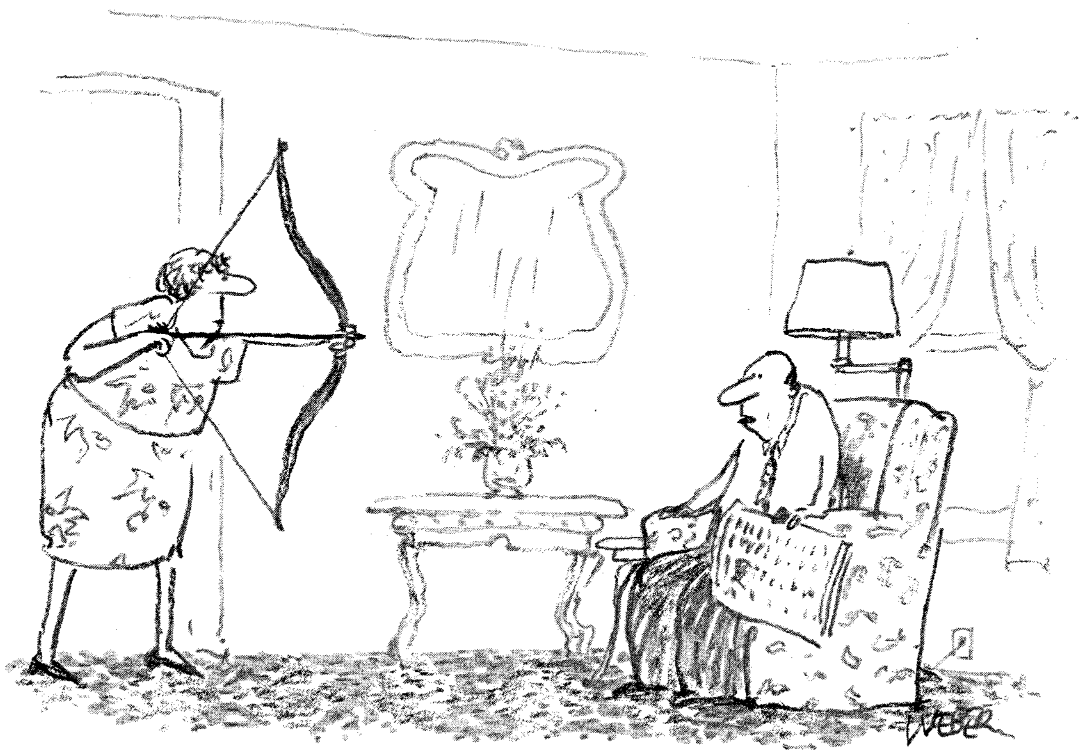


"*I guess that's the message and I'm the medium.*"

• •

story. He considered me silently for a moment—he was a short, wiry, bright-eyed man—then began to speak in rapid Portuguese.

He had been a successful peasant farmer, he said, the owner of a motorcycle, two bicycles, and a good patch of land near the town of Morrumbala. In January, 1983, a group of *bandidos* accosted him in his fields. They said the government must have given him the bicycle he had with him, to help him spy on Renamo. They bound his hands behind him, marched him to their camp, and presented him and his bicycle to their commander. He was left on the ground overnight, with his hands still tied behind him. In the morning, when he refused to confess to being a government spy the Renamo commander hacked off his right ear with a knife, stuffed the ear in Galave's mouth, and then forced him to chew and swallow it. Galave was blindfolded—the blindfold was red, he recalled—and was told that there was more mutilation in store for him. Galave murmured that he had placed his fate in the hands of God. "Do you know God?" his captors demanded. No, Galave admitted, he did not know Him. His captors proceeded to chop off his nose, his lips, and his left hand. They had trouble severing the ligaments in his wrist, but managed eventually. They then slit his throat—Galave showed me a ten-inch-long scar I had not noticed—and carried him out to the road, "so that Frelimo might find me."

Galave, bleeding heavily, fainted. When he awoke, he saw that there was no one around, and crawled into the bushes, where he fainted again. The next time he awoke, he could hear the *bandidos*, who had returned, searching for him. Galave lay still, and eventually heard them give him up for dead. That evening, he found some mud with which to stanch the bleeding at his wrist and throat. The next day, he got up and tried to walk, but he was lost, and every time he saw people they fled at the sight of him. Just when he thought he must be at the point of death, he came upon a ripe watermelon in the bush. "This watermelon was a gift from God," Galave told me solemnly. He broke it open with one foot, ate it all, and, with renewed energy, resumed his trek. He eventually found his way back to his farm. It was deserted—his family had fled at the news that Renamo was near—but Galave waited there, and he was on hand when his family returned to collect their belongings. His family carried him into town, and a plane was called from Quelimane, but the pilot, fearing sniper fire, refused to come. Finally, a military plane carrying wounded soldiers out of Morrumbala took Galave to Quelimane.

Galave spent the next two years in hospitals in Quelimane, Maputo, and Beira (the second-largest city in Mozambique). A Swiss specialist took skin grafts from his thigh to close his wrist. Surgeons in Maputo tried to rebuild his lips—"but that was a failure," Galave said, pointing to his exposed gums. There was nothing to be done about his nose or his ear. Since he could not go back to farming with only one hand, he and his wife decided to settle in Quelimane. In 1985, they returned to Morrumbala to collect their belongings. It was the worst time they could have picked. Renamo launched a major offensive across Zambézia, and the Galaves were trapped. They had to flee Morrumbala on foot. They eventually made their way to Malawi, and at the time I met Mr. Galave they had been there three years, living on handouts from international relief organizations. Some of the people sitting in the dust around us, he said, were old neighbors of his from Morrumbala. Until their escape last week, they had been living with Renamo.

I told Galave that I had been in Morrumbala and Quelimane, and that both were in government hands. He stared at me awhile, then said he thought he would wait until the war was over before trying to return.

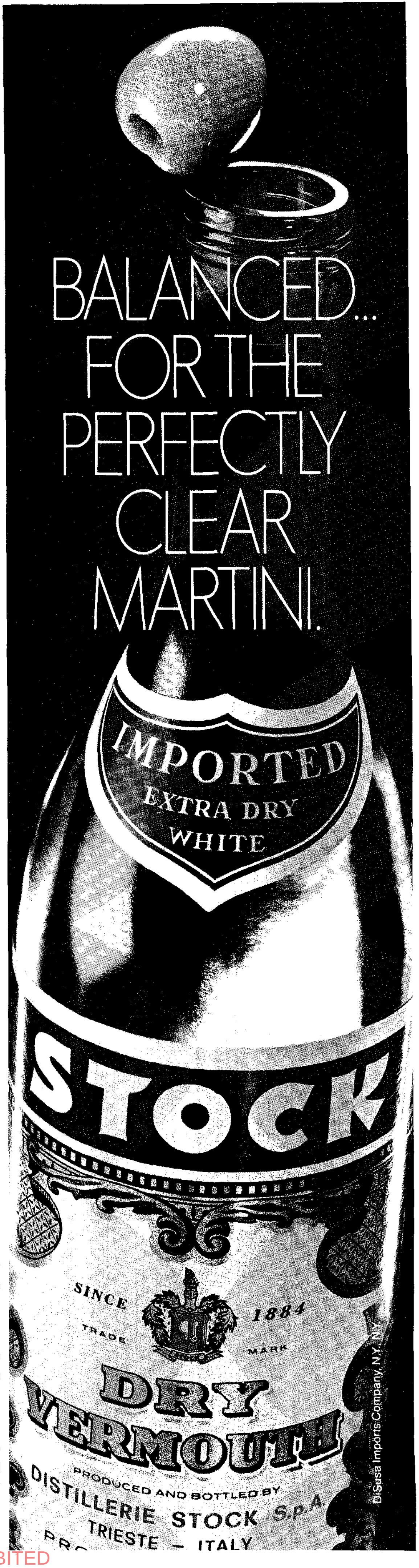
THE cruelty of Renamo mesmerizes everyone in Mozambique, from the peasant whose own head sinks before its scythe to the members of the many foreign delegations that come to survey the wreckage. Westerners grope numbly through their own history for precedents and analogies, and often alight on the European Middle Ages. One British newspaper even quoted a Mozambican official as saying, "This is a war from the Middle Ages." In the sense that tribal and feudal arrangements still dominate rural Mozambique as they did, say, medieval Germany centuries before the consolidation of the modern nation-state, the metaphor is useful. But the butchery taking place in Mozambique is, unfortunately, not so foreign to modern warfare.

Renamo's ferocity does have unique aspects. In 1985, the United Nations sponsored a vaccination campaign for children in south-central Mozambique. The country's child-mortality rate has risen horrifyingly as a result of the war—it is now approaching three hundred and seventy-five deaths per thousand live births, probably the highest in the world—and many thousands of children are dying each year from preventable diseases like measles. In a vast area with no newspapers (and few literate people), radio was the obvious choice for announcing the campaign. But it was feared that announcements would provoke Renamo attacks. So the vaccination campaign was conducted clandestinely. Small teams went out to schools and villages to proselytize about the importance of vaccinations, with nothing said about dates. Weeks or months later, word would suddenly go out through the Frelimo Party structures, down to the level of the ten-family cell: the vaccination team is coming tomorrow. People would be assembled, vaccinated, and dispersed as quickly as possible. Although some of those who were vaccinated were *later* attacked by Renamo, the campaign was, on the whole, a success. But the United Nations health workers I spoke with said that the campaign's security problems had been unprecedented in their experience.

According to the government, Renamo has destroyed more than seven hundred clinics and rural health posts. By the end of 1987, it had killed at least twenty-one health workers and kidnapped many more. In July, 1987, a Renamo attack on the town of Homoine, which, according to the government, killed four hundred and twenty-four civilians, included a rampage through a hospital in which patients, even pregnant women and newborn babies, were killed in their beds. Along with health centers, prime Renamo targets are schools, relief convoys, and relief workers. More than two thousand schools have been destroyed. As of 1985, a hundred and twenty-five teachers had been killed or were missing. Relief convoys are attacked regularly: CARE International's inventory list for its trucks is studded with the notations "ambushed," "burned," and "mined," often with an accompanying "killed" for its drivers. Captured Renamo documents show that international-aid workers are indeed considered valid, even important, military targets.

According to the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference, Renamo has boiled children alive in front of their parents and has used the decapitated heads of old people as seats. *Newsweek* quoted a peasant saying that Renamo was eating children. The *Guardian* reported that Renamo was crushing skulls, disembowelling people, and nailing them to trees. In April, 1988, the United States Department of State issued a major report, based on interviews with nearly two hundred Mozambican refugees, that included, in its catalogue of Renamo's violence against civilians, "shooting executions, knife/axe/bayonet killings, burning alive, beating to death, forced asphyxiation, forced starvation, forced drownings, and random shooting at civilians in villages during attacks." The State Department's report, which estimated that a hundred thousand civilians may have been murdered by Renamo, had a powerful impact on the debates in this country over American policy toward Mozambique. It had a powerful impact on me, too. Among other things, it reinforced an unexamined assumption that Renamo came from Hell.

Several months after the release of the State Department's report, I met, in Maputo, an American psychologist who was working with war-damaged children. He told me some of the worst Renamo stories I heard. He said that a six-year-old boy had been forced to light the match with which Renamo burned down his family's hut, and had then been forced to watch while his family ran outside and were hacked to death and burned. He said that a ten-year-old boy had seen his best friend decapitated by Renamo and had then been forced to carry his friend's head on top of his own head back to the Renamo camp. The psychologist had worked with child soldiers from the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and he said he thought that



Renamo's behavior toward the children it abducted was "more insidious than what the Khmer did, from a psychological point of view." Renamo's ultra-violence was linked somehow to the psychology of South African apartheid, he said. Beyond that, he couldn't explain it. This, to me, was another way of saying that Renamo comes from Hell.

But the time I spent in Mozambique undid that idea for me. I don't doubt that Renamo is linked in a multitude of ways to South Africa, and I don't doubt that Renamo has murdered civilians by every method mentioned in the State Department's report, and probably forty others. But Renamo does not come from Hell. Renamo comes from Mozambique.

THE fact that some people scarcely realize they live in a country called Mozambique stems from the fact that Portugal, which declared the place a unit to begin with, never had the wherewithal to turn it into one. The first Portuguese arrived in 1498, but it was not until the twentieth century that Lisbon even gained control of the entire colony. There was competition from Swahili traders for commercial supremacy along the coast. Inland, two African empires and numerous independent chieftaincies frustrated the attempts of the Portuguese to extend their rule. In the seventeenth century, Portuguese merchants did lucrative business with the great gold mines of the Muenemutapa empire, in what is now west-central Mozambique and eastern Zimbabwe, but in 1692 the Muenemutapa army drove the Europeans back to the coast. In the eighteenth century, the major international trade was in ivory. In the nineteenth century, it was in slaves. Powerful slave-raiding states grew up, and the entire northern half of Mozambique was impoverished and almost depopulated as more than a million people were captured, sold, and shipped to Brazil, the United States, and the Caribbean islands. Still, in 1885, when the European powers were dividing up Africa at the Berlin Conference, the effective rule of Portugal in Mozambique was confined to a few coastal settlements. The area that the Europeans called Mozambique contained people speaking more than a dozen different languages and an estimated two hundred dialects.

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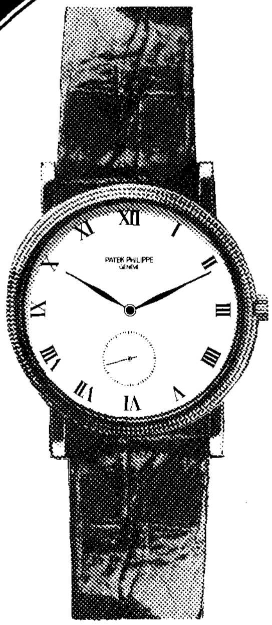
The sudden appearance of large-scale mining in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, created demands for migrant labor and the development of Mozambique's ports, and these changes, in combination with Portugal's weakness, shaped Mozambique's economy decisively. In the southern city of Lourenço Marques (now Maputo), "only 27 percent of the investments in 1900 consisted of Portuguese capital," Allen and Barbara Isaacman write in their book "Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution, 1900-1982." "The city's electrical system, trolley system, and first modern wharf complex were all financed by foreign, primarily British, capital—a situation not unlike that in Lisbon itself." Even the concessionary companies licensed to develop agriculture and industry in Mozambique were largely British-owned. On the plantations that were started, labor conditions were frightful. The slave trade persisted, in one form or another, into the twentieth century, and forced labor was not abolished until 1961. Hundreds of thousands of Mozambicans fled their homes for the higher wages and marginally less brutal colonial systems in neighboring states. The effects of this exodus were profound: at independence, less than ten per cent of the land was under cultivation. (Today, because of the war, the figure is only four per cent.)

Although Mozambique runs north-south, nearly all development in the country was along east-west lines. Railroads, highways, and ports were built to serve Rhodesia and South Africa as outlets to the sea. The South Africans agreed to pay part of the wages of Mozambican mineworkers directly to the Portuguese in gold. These remittances became the mainstay of the colonial government's budget, and southern Mozambique was effectively integrated into the expanding South African industrial economy. António Salazar, the dictator who came to power in Portugal in 1932, struggled to assert the metropole's control over its colonies, and in the late nineteen-forties Portugal did finally manage to account for more than half of Mozambique's external trade.

Under Salazar, Portuguese emigration to Mozambique increased sharply. The European population of the colony was twenty-seven thousand in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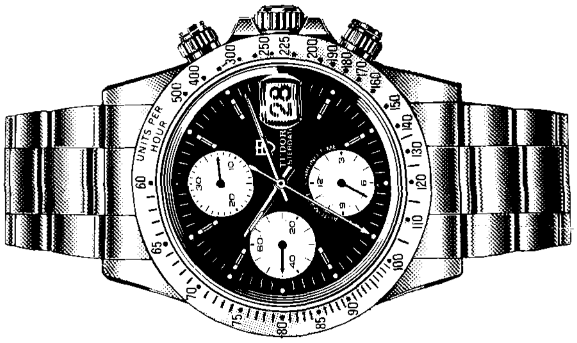
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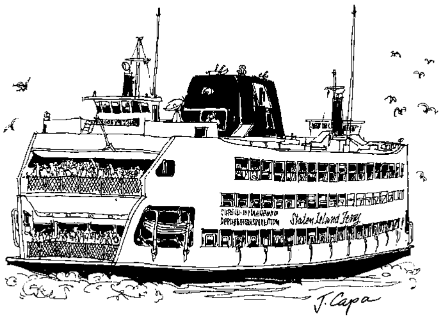
1940; in 1970, it was over two hundred thousand. The Salazar regime was trying to export some of its social and political problems, such as unemployment and landlessness. Most of the Portuguese who went to Mozambique were peasants—a 1955 census showed that only a third of them could read and write—but racial discrimination guaranteed them a level of security and comfort that few had known in Europe. Blacks were barred from most jobs; even the bus drivers and the movie ushers were white. Local industry grew, and, in the nineteen-sixties, actually boomed. By 1975, Mozambique was the eighth-largest industrial producer in Africa. But Africans were banned from trade, and that meant that the country had no indigenous business class. As Joseph Hanlon, a correspondent for the BBC, wrote in his 1984 book, "Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire," "Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in Africa not because it lacks natural resources, nor because Portugal left it undeveloped, but rather because Portugal actively underdeveloped it."

Among the many features of their own repressive political machinery that the Portuguese brought to Mozambique was a fearsome secret police. In the decades following the Second World War, when other African countries were gaining their independence, the Portuguese were crushing every hint of resistance to colonial rule in Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau. Nationalist groups were harassed, outlawed, and driven into exile, their leaders jailed, tortured, and murdered. In 1960, a group of Mozambican peasants gathered in the northern town of Mueda for a peaceful protest, and colonial troops opened fire, killing at least six hundred. Finally, in 1962, three outlawed nationalist groups met in Dar es Salaam, in the newly independent Tanganyika (now Tanzania), to found the Frente de Libertaçao de Moçambique. Frelimo's first president was Eduardo Mondlane, an American-educated sociologist (and Mozambique's first Ph.D.). Frelimo's armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism began in 1964.

The war lasted ten years. Eduardo Mondlane was assassinated in 1969. His successor was Samora Machel, a former nurse and a gifted commander. Frelimo received support from China and the Soviet Union. Its main rear bases were in Tanzania, and, despite Portugal's vast military superiority, Frelimo, waging guerrilla warfare with light weapons, steadily expanded its "liberated zones" until they covered the northern fourth of the country. Frelimo also had cells among intellectuals and workers in all the major towns. Portugal was fighting gruelling wars in Angola and Guinea-Bissau at the same time, and in April, 1974, a leftist coup in Lisbon, led by military officers fed up with the colonial wars, toppled the government. A year later, Samora Machel became Mozambique's first President.

The war had radicalized the Frelimo leadership, and in 1977 the liberation movement became a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party and signed long-term assistance pacts with the Soviet Union and Cuba. By that time, more than ninety per cent of the Portuguese in Mozambique had departed. Frelimo was non-racial—its leadership contained whites, Asians, and people of mixed race as well as blacks—but the end of legal racial privilege was clearly intolerable to many whites. The new government guaranteed that private wealth would be protected, but post-independence nationalizations of land-ownership, rental property, and social services, including education, medicine, and law, sped the flight of the former rulers. Most went to South Africa or back to Portugal, abandoning their farms and factories and, in many cases, destroying the cattle, tractors, and machinery they could not take with them.

Frelimo was left to run an effectively bankrupt country with virtually no trained people. The illiteracy rate was over ninety per cent. There were six economists, two agronomists, not a single geologist, and fewer than a thousand black high-school graduates in all of Mozambique. Of three hundred and fifty railroad engineers working in 1975, just one was black (and he was an agent of the Portuguese secret police). A large-scale expansion of the educational system was undertaken, along with a crash program to provide health care in the rural areas, where eighty-five per cent of Mozambicans live. An ambitious plan to modernize and socialize agriculture and industry was drawn up. As the victor over the Portuguese, Frelimo was hugely popular, but the basic task facing the new government was still nation-building. The colonial regime had violently discouraged all forms of national consciousness, and millions of isolated peasants still had to be persuaded that they belonged to something called Mozambique.



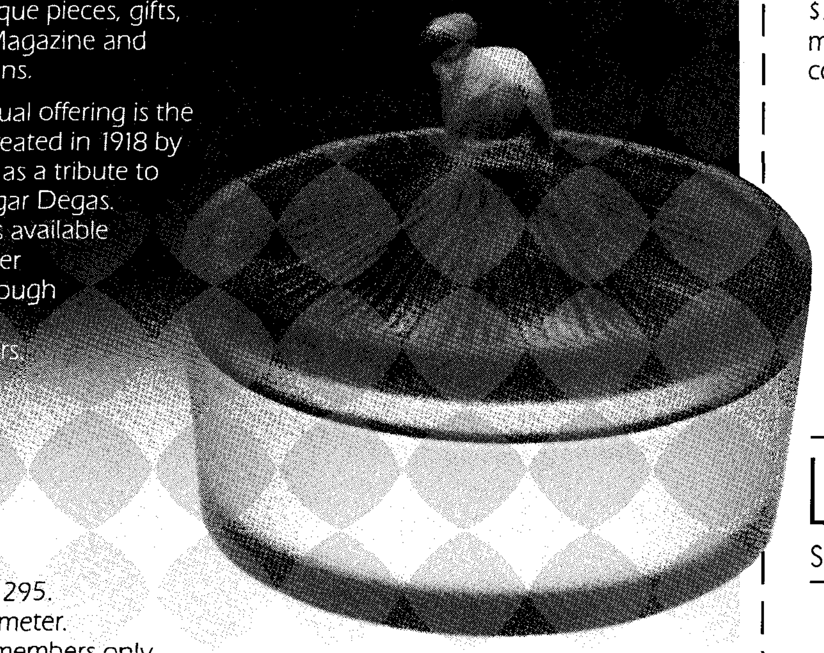
But the gravest threat to the fledgling country was external. While the victory of the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies was an inspiration to the black majorities struggling for freedom in South Africa and Rhodesia, it was regarded with alarm by their white rulers. The liberation war in Rhodesia was intensifying, and Frelimo began providing rear bases to the guerrillas of the Zimbabwe African National Union, or ZANU, the larger of the two movements fighting white-minority rule there. Frelimo also began applying the trade sanctions against Rhodesia which had been ordered by the United Nations, and which the colonial regime had flouted (and South Africa continued to flout), although the cost to Mozambique was staggering. The Rhodesians, on their side, launched raids into Mozambique. They bombed bridges, dams, railway lines, and oil-storage facilities. In August, 1976, they massacred eight hundred and seventy-five people in a refugee camp. They also assembled a gang of former Portuguese soldiers and secret police, Frelimo deserters, and escaped prisoners who had fled Mozambique, and created what its mastermind, a Rhodesian military-intelligence chief named Ken Flower, called a "pseudo-terrorist" movement: Renamo.

Renamo was originally meant to be a Fifth Column, its task to spy on ZANU guerrillas in Mozambique. Later, its assignment was expanded to include the destruction of infrastructure, in an effort to raise the cost to Frelimo of supporting ZANU. Many Renamo fighters, including the group's first leader, André Matsangaissa, and his deputy, Afonso Dhlakama, had escaped from "reëducation" camps—rural prisons established by Frelimo after independence. Matsangaissa was a former Frelimo soldier who had been convicted of stealing a Mercedes-Benz; Dhlakama, who fought with the Portuguese colonial army and later joined Frelimo, had also been cashiered for theft. Matsangaissa was killed in battle in 1979—Dhlakama replaced him—but by 1980 Renamo, primarily through raids on reëducation camps, had succeeded in raising a force of between a thousand and two thousand men. Operations, however, were still confined to the center of the country, near the Rhodesian border. And then the Rhodesian war ended. In March, 1980, with independence coming to Zimbabwe, Renamo looked like a spent force. But on the eve of Zimbabwean independence South Africa sent a fleet of military transport planes to ferry the remnants of Renamo south.

Pretoria had been putting great economic pressure on Mozambique since independence. Its economic punishments were caresses, though, compared with the damage that South Africa began to inflict once it had taken over Renamo. Recruiting was stepped up, training was expanded, and in late 1980 the infiltration of large Renamo contingents into Mozambique by air, land, and sea began. Fronts were opened in the south, near the South African border, and in the north, with transit routes through Malawi (whose government has a long association with Pretoria). By mid-1981, nine of Mozambique's ten provinces were under attack. The ferocity and the scale of the onslaught clearly caught Frelimo unprepared. Ken Flower himself later wrote, "I began to wonder whether we had created a monster that was now beyond control."

South Africa had several objectives in unleashing its monster on Mozambique. One was to stop Frelimo's support for the African National Congress, the leading liberation movement in South Africa. The A.N.C., which is outlawed in South Africa, was using Mozambican territory to infiltrate guerrillas into the country. A second, broader objective was to increase the economic dependence on South Africa of all the neighboring countries. In 1980, coinciding with the declaration of Zimbabwe's independence, nine of South Africa's neighbors had formed the Southern African Development Coördination Conference (S.A.D.C.C.), whose main purpose was to *reduce* the region's dependence on South Africa. That meant developing the regional transportation system, which, in turn, meant using the short, convenient routes to the sea through Mozambique. Renamo therefore concentrated on disrupting those transport routes, and by 1984 three of the four rail lines running from S.A.D.C.C. countries through Mozambique to the coast had been cut and the fourth was being attacked regularly. Landlocked countries like Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, and Malawi were left with no alternative but to import and export goods through South Africa. A third objective in South Africa's campaign against Mozambique (and its neighbors) was, finally, symbolic: because the fundamental justification for apartheid is that majority rule in Africa is a disaster, it was essential to insure that it always turned out that way.

Pretoria's destabilization campaign



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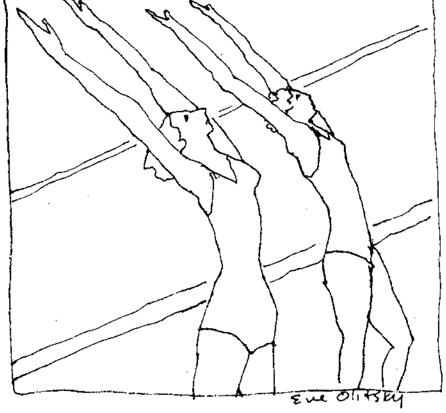
has not been limited to Mozambique. South Africa has recruited, trained, or given support to armed dissidents in Angola, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho as well, and since 1980 the South African military has itself staged bloody raids into no fewer than six nearby countries. In Mozambique, there have been air raids, commando attacks, sophisticated sabotage, and assassinations of prominent A.N.C. members: Ruth First, a sociologist, was killed by a parcel bomb in Maputo in 1982; Albie Sachs, a distinguished legal scholar, lost an arm to a car bomb in April, 1988.

While Renamo remained the blunt main instrument of South African policy toward Mozambique, Pretoria was not Renamo's only source of external support. Portuguese ex-colonials living in South Africa, Portugal, Malawi, and Brazil, including wealthy businessmen who lost property when independence came to Mozambique, contributed heavily. Renamo delegates started turning up at the meetings of the World Anti-Communist League with shopping lists of weapons. Right-wing groups in the United States eventually became important backers, and some of the more dedicated proponents of the so-called Reagan Doctrine in Congress, in the Administration, and in the Central Intelligence Agency—including the C.I.A. director, William Casey; Senator Jesse Helms; and the White House communications director, Patrick Buchanan (who met with a Renamo representative in the White House)—began to push for direct American support for Renamo. This push gained strength after the United States started sending weapons to the South African-backed rebels in Angola, in 1985. The State Department opposed aid to Renamo, but the State Department had also opposed aid to the Angolan rebels.

By 1983, Mozambique was in desperate shape. The national economy had essentially collapsed, all ambitious socialist-development plans were off, and Frelimo was suing for peace. In March, 1984, a "non-aggression pact" known as the Nkomati Accord was signed. South Africa agreed to end its support for Renamo; Mozambique agreed to evict the A.N.C. By all accounts, Mozambique kept its end of the bargain. South Africa did not. Renamo attacks continued and in August, 1985, diaries were discovered at an overrun Renamo headquarters on Gorongosa Mountain, in central Mozambique, that contained clear evidence of continuing South African support. Top South African officials, including the commander-in-chief of the Army and the Deputy Foreign Minister, had actually visited the Renamo camp only weeks before it was overrun. The diaries showed a split inside the South African leadership over support for Renamo, but no disciplinary measures were taken against those officials revealed to have been violating the accord. Indeed, some of them were promoted.

Evidence that South Africa—or, at least, elements of the South African military—still supports Renamo continues to surface, though none of it is as clear-cut as the Gorongosa diaries. Renamo's chances for official American aid dimmed in 1987, after several major massacres were attributed to its forces, and seemed to disappear altogether in April, 1988, when the State Department, delivering the coup de grâce in its long battle with the Republican right on the issue, released the report that accused Renamo of murdering a hundred thousand civilians. No government can be publicly associated with Renamo now. Even the South African-backed rebels in Angola refuse to let Renamo representatives visit their camps, saying, "They have no nationalist credentials." Today, in fact, governments from almost every point on the political spectrum all but trip over one another in their rush to assist the government of Mozambique. The Soviet Union remains Frelimo's main military supplier, but Margaret Thatcher's Britain provides much-needed radios and training, and even the Reagan Administration last year proposed sending a consignment of non-lethal military aid. (It was not approved by Congress.) Mozambique is the largest single recipient of Italian foreign aid. (The United States is the largest donor of emergency aid.) In the last five years, Mozambique has turned to Western financial institutions for help, joining the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, encouraging investment by foreign multinational corporations, and making a serious effort to revive a domestic private sector—all somehow without alienating its socialist allies.



So Renamo has lost the propaganda war. And yet the war goes on. In 1986, a major Renamo offensive in Zambézia, driving from Malawi down to the coast, nearly succeeded in cutting Mozambique in two. Samora Machel's death, in October, 1986, in an airplane crash inside South Africa, stunned Frelimo, and the international press reported in December that the fall of Quelimane was imminent. If Renamo had succeeded in taking Quelimane, its plans called for the declaration of an independent republic in the northern half of the country. That offensive fell short, finally, and a joint Mozambican-Zimbabwean counter-offensive in 1987 succeeded in driving Renamo from the main towns. But hundreds of thousands of refugees continued to pour out of Mozambique in 1988, and Renamo still moves freely in the countryside, attacking and pillaging at an undiminished pace.

Externally, Renamo seems to be in shambles. The movement's main international spokesman, a Portuguese lawyer of Goanese descent named Evo Fernandes, was murdered by unknown gunmen in April 1988, near Lisbon. When I went to Lisbon to talk to Renamo, I was told that its new spokesman was a law student whose office was the law-school cafeteria at lunchtime. I never managed to catch him there. Instead, I found the spokesman for a breakaway group, Unamo. Renamo's office in London turned out to be a mailing address where no one recognized the name on the Renamo literature that supposedly originated there. Renamo's office in Washington, D.C., turned out to be space borrowed from a right-wing foundation called Free the Eagle. Its representatives there denounced their brethren in Lisbon.

And yet the war goes on.

ONE evening, I asked Dividas about himself.

"I was born in Beira, in 1951," he said. "My father was a nurse. That

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was one of the best jobs an African could have in those days. We lived in a cement house and always had a servant. My father was one of the big men in the community, so the men used to come to our house to talk. I liked to listen to them, but they never let me stay when they talked about politics. I liked to listen to Radio Frelimo, but I had to do it in secret, because my father wouldn't allow it. He said it was dangerous, because someone standing outside the window might hear it and tell the PIDE"—the Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado, the colonial secret police. "My father and his friends wanted the Portuguese to leave our country, but they were afraid.

"I went to a Catholic boarding school near Caia. My father wanted to send me on to high school in Beira, but I wanted to stay where I was. In those days, I only wanted to study, and there were too many distractions in the city—sports, girls, different things to do. My father and I could not agree about anything. I didn't know why. Finally, I came back to Beira, but I stopped going to school. On Radio Frelimo at that time, they were always calling for young boys to join Frelimo. They said they had scholarships. Anybody could become a doctor or an engineer. I didn't really care about politics, but I very much wanted an education. So I decided to join Frelimo then. The problem was how to leave the country. There had been some priests who helped boys to leave, but they had been caught by the PIDE.

"When I was nineteen, I joined the Portuguese Army. My father was very unhappy about it, but he would have been even more unhappy if he had known my real plan, which was to desert to Frelimo. I was trained as a paratrooper, then sent to Tete"—a northwestern province where the anti-colonial war was intense. "Because I could speak the language there, they made me an interpreter. I went on patrols, and I helped with interrogations. I tried to interpret what people said so that the interrogators heard what they wanted to hear, and in the night I would go to the prisoners and explain to them that they must always tell the same story, no matter what happened, because as soon as they changed their story they would have even bigger trouble. Many people were killed anyway. The worst torturer was a very big black guy named Chico Nyaka. *Nyaka* means 'snake.'" Dividas laughed quietly, shaking his head. "Chico, Chico, Chico," he said. "Hey, Chico." Dividas pronounced it "sheik-o," and sounded as if he were calling, very gently, to a mad child. "When independence came, the people in Tete found Chico, and before Frelimo could stop them they tore him apart and chopped him into small pieces with machetes.

"My chance to desert came one day when I had to deliver a group of Frelimo sympathizers to the PIDE. I asked the sympathizers to take me to Frelimo. At first, they refused. I said, 'O.K. Then you will suffer.' Finally, they took a chance, and they led me into the bush. We walked for eight hours. They took away my pistol and my uniform. At last, we came to a Frelimo camp. I was very surprised to find some people I knew there. These were people that the Portuguese had interrogated, but I had *believed* them when they said they knew nothing about Frelimo. The camp commander believed my story, because those people told him that I was a good man and had not hurt them when they were prisoners.

"The next morning, a Frelimo soldier who had been following us came into the camp. He had been very frightened when he saw me on the trail, and he said I was a spy. They tied me up, and then they beat me and kicked me. When I said I wanted to fight with Frelimo, they said, 'We are not your brothers! Where are your brothers here?' They sentenced me to death, and the women and children were sent away from the camp. Then there was a meeting to decide how to report the execution. While the meeting was going on, a Frelimo political commissar arrived. He saw me there. When he heard that I had not been captured but had come to the camp myself, he told them to untie me. He told me that it was all a mistake, and he welcomed me to Frelimo.

d. ehrenberg

"I was sent to Zambia by foot, and then to Tanzania by truck. In Tanzania, I received training in anti-aircraft and rocket artillery. I was at Nachingwea, in southern Tanzania, waiting to go back into Mozambique, but my orders never came. People started saying that deserters from the Portuguese were not trusted, and that was why I was not sent. Then my commander told me that they wanted to send me overseas to study. That was what I really wanted. But the scholarship never came, either. I was in Nachingwea for nearly a year. Finally, people started saying that because most of our leaders were from the south of Mozambique the scholarships were going to other people from the south, and because I was from Beira I would never receive one. That was when I deserted from Frelimo.

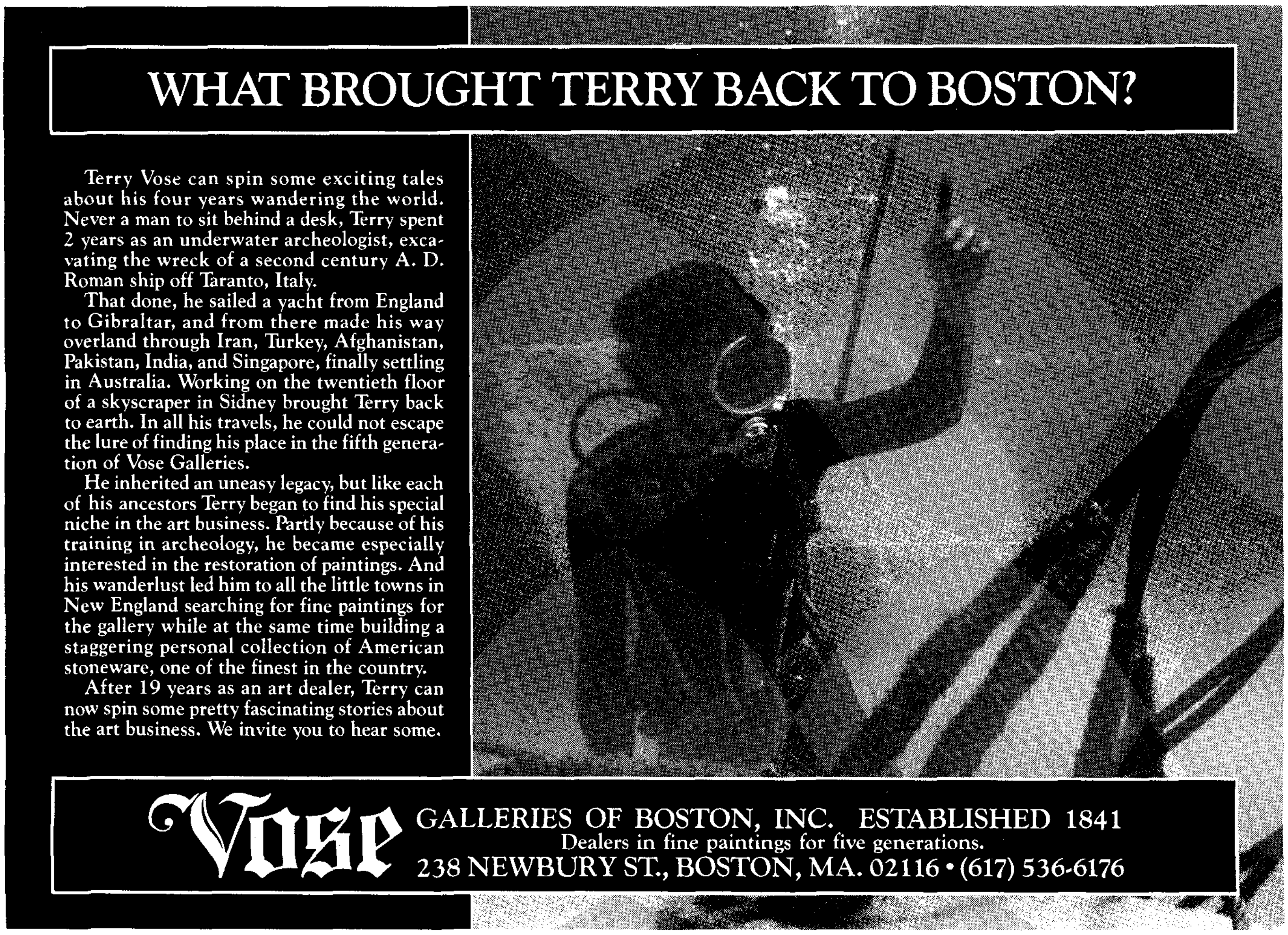
"I hitchhiked to the Kenyan border, walked across at night, and went on to Nairobi. I was very hungry, so I went to the police station. The police arrested me, and said they would deport me. But after two days they let me go. I went to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. After some weeks, they sent me to Addis Ababa, and gave me a scholarship. I studied six years in Ethiopia, in English, and I graduated from high school there. I married an Ethiopian girl, and we had a daughter. I was afraid to make contact with my family, because I was sure the PIDE would be watching them, hoping to find out where I was. But after the coup in Lisbon in 1974 I wrote to my sister. She wrote back to me that our father had travelled to Tete to look for me after he heard that I had disappeared. But now he didn't believe it was me writing from Ethiopia. Even after I sent her another letter, he didn't believe it was me. Then, in 1976, when my daughter was born, I sent a photograph of myself with her. My sister told me that our father carried the photograph around with him, and that he would show it to people, especially after a few drinks: his son and his granddaughter in Ethiopia. I think I was his favorite child, even though I disobeyed him. He never wrote to me himself, though. There was still a security risk. Frelimo was in power, and they hated me for deserting, just as the Portuguese had. Then, in 1977, my father died.

"My family started writing letters begging me to come home. They said they were suffering. Luis Bernardo Honwana, who is now the Minister of Culture, came to Addis Ababa and talked to the Mozambicans there, telling us we should come back. I told him I had never seen him at Nachingwea, and I asked how he could prove that Frelimo would not kill us, and he said he would ask Samora himself to protect me. My wife did not want to go to Mozambique, but when my older brother, who had joined Frelimo, wrote to me that our mother was really suffering, I decided to come back. I was detained at the airport in Maputo, but Honwana and Samora did protect me, and after a few hours I was allowed to go. I found that my family were not suffering—they had just wanted me to come home. My daughter later came from Ethiopia, but I have not seen my wife again. I have a Mozambican wife now, and two more children, and my daughter from Ethiopia also lives with us."

Dividas settled in Maputo and began working for international organizations there. He got one warning from Frelimo. "Armando Guebuza, who is now the Minister of Transport, called a meeting for people in my position. He said the government would be watching us very closely, and we should know it. I've never had any trouble with the government, but if you write something about me perhaps you could say I deserted from Frelimo because of 'political immaturity.' "

Dividas laughed lightly. If he had stayed with Frelimo, I thought, he would have been in a high-ranking job in the government or the Army by now. Many top Frelimo officials are surprisingly young, and Frelimo, unlike most ruling parties in Africa, is known for rewarding competence.

IN Quelimane, Dividas and I stayed at the Hotel Chuabo. Seven floors of glass, steel, wood panelling, and ersatz marble, the Chuabo was said to be the best hotel in Mozambique outside Maputo. Its proprietress, a Portuguese woman known as Dona Amélia, "kept up standards" with a vengeance. She was a stolid, imposing woman in her forties. Every evening, she and her husband, who was much older, ate supper at the same well-set table in the seventh-floor dining room with the same companion, a dissipated-looking Portuguese with a cigarette hanging permanently from his lip. The three of them represented a significant share of the Portuguese population remaining in Quelimane. After supper, Dona Amélia did her accounts, sitting ramrod-straight on a barstool, while her terrified staff lurked in the background. Her waiters and bellhops all looked and acted as if they had been lobotomized. Samora Machel had once visited the Chuabo, it was said, and a deputation of the hotel's workers had approached the President to protest Dona Amélia's treatment. It was worse than the plantations in colonial days, they said. Machel had been torn. He had long preached the need for black Mozambicans to decolonize their minds as well as their country, but he also had a military man's love of order and efficiency—and the Hotel Chuabo, by God, *worked*. Dona Amélia survived that revolt, and she also survived a crisis, it was said, after her son was discovered to be a Renamo agent. She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even arranged somehow for him to be deported to Portugal long before his prison sentence was served out.

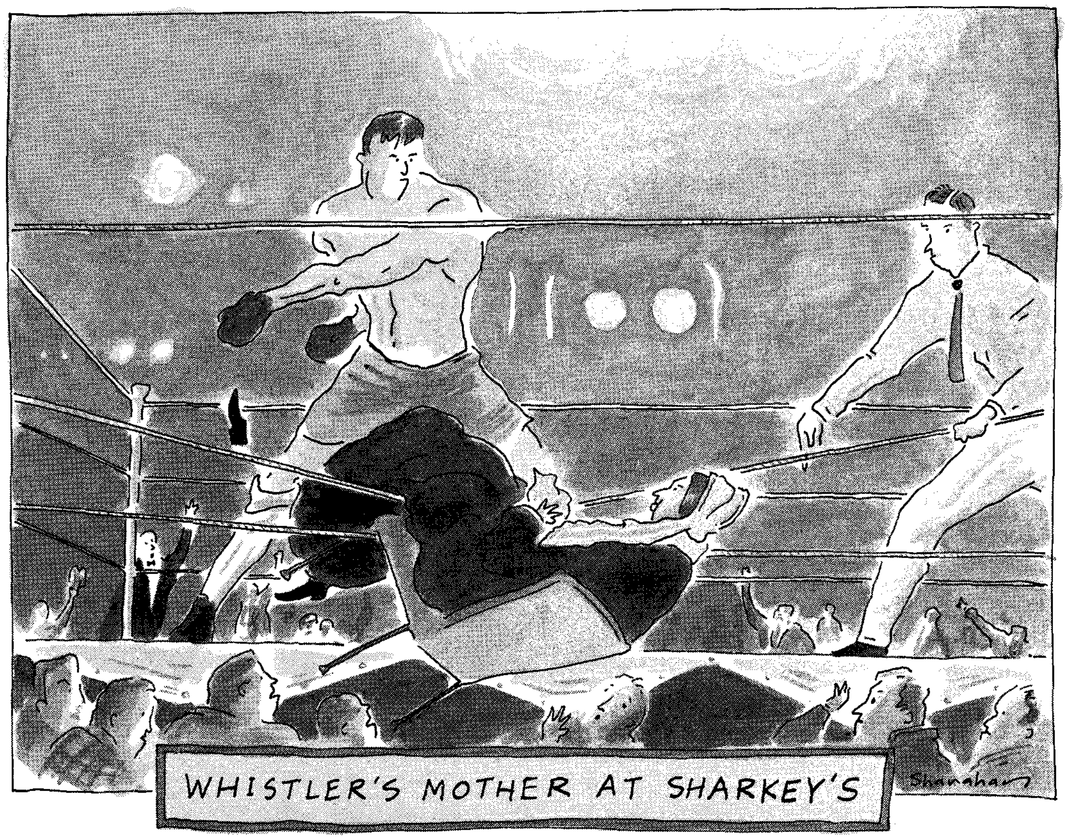
Most of the people in Quelimane—where the peacetime population of sixty thousand has been doubled by the war (the only reason it is not much larger is that the government does not distribute free food in the cities)—lived on the outskirts, in the cane town. The waterfront was quiet, almost deserted; dogs slept in the middle of the street at noon. Quelimane was once the busiest slave port in Mozambique—in the eighteen-twenties, thirty thousand slaves a year passed through—and a number of ancient, thick-walled homes from its heyday survived. A few garish new buildings—the Chuabo; the Banco de Moçambique, with its two-story lobby and bright abstract mosaics—evoked the short boom of the nineteen-sixties. Most of the storefronts, though, were empty, or had little in their salt-smeared windows beyond a scatter of cheap, sun-ruined goods. The value of the metical, the Mozambican currency, was such that, to pay for a few small items in Quelimane's only supermarket, I had to count out seven large piles of bills, and when one fifty-metical note disintegrated in my hand the cashier calmly swept the remains onto the floor.

Cash has a gloriously weak hold on the Mozambican imagination. At the Ministry of Information in Maputo, I came upon two American hundred-dollar bills lying on a desk in an empty office. Per-capita income in Mozambique is less than a hundred dollars a year, and this was *hard currency*, so I was flabbergasted. The ministry's offices were unlocked—indeed, nearly every doorknob I touched there came off in my hand—and saw an endless traffic of clerks, messengers, and reporters. But when the young official who sat at the desk showed up, and I pointed out the money, he shrugged, said something about a foreign correspondent wanting hotel reservations, and pushed the bills aside. "Here money means very little," the official said. "You could put this in the street, and the children would pick it up, then throw it down. It's such a new thing, people don't know what it means. I could leave this money on my desk for two days. No one would take it. If I left this shirt, O.K., someone would take it right away." He indicated the South African soccer shirt he wore. It had "Charles" (not his name) written on the breast. His own salary, I knew, was about fifteen dollars a week.

The official was right, no doubt, about what it was safe to leave on his desk. But money was less a new thing in Mozambique than it was a debased thing. In the countryside, it had lost value with the collapse, after independence, of the rural trading network. The Portuguese had abandoned the shops where peasants bought manufactured goods. Frelimo's attempts to keep the shops going failed, and peasants soon found themselves with piles of cash, which they had earned from selling their surplus produce but now had nowhere to spend. Eventually they stopped marketing their surplus. That meant food shortages in the cities. Renamo attacks also prevented produce from reaching the cities. Since cashews and cotton, export crops produced primarily by peasants, are main sources of Mozambique's foreign exchange, the lack of peasant production meant that the hard currency available for imported consumer goods dried up. The pickings in urban shops grew increasingly scarce, and by 1983 money was worth little more in the cities than it was in the countryside. A fierce economic-recovery program, first implemented in 1987, had succeeded in filling urban shops with goods again by 1988, but, after a series of devaluations of the metical, so few Mozambicans could afford to buy anything that, for the ordinary worker, money still meant far less than access to a vegetable plot did. Meanwhile, in rural areas, where Renamo had destroyed or looted over a thousand shops, there was less to buy than ever.

About the value of clothing, the information office was clearly right. In Maputo, where a laborer's monthly salary is about the same as the price of a shirt, I was told that the primary responsibility of the guards posted before every middle-class residence is to protect the clothesline. The journalist Philip Van Niekerk has written about being in a movie house in Lichinga, in the northern province of Niassa, and watching a Soviet film about "a truck driver who rapes and murders two young girls and deposits their naked bodies on a garden dump. As he shoves their clothes into a furnace, the audience rises in protest: it is hard to imagine a worse crime in Lichinga than burning clothes." In Quelimane, young women were continually calling out to Dividas on the street, asking him if he wouldn't like to give them his hat or his shirt.

Actually, in the cities in Mozambique, a tide of new prosperity appears to be rising. Late-model Land Rovers are a common sight on streets that, until recently, had not seen a new vehicle since 1975. But the only growth industry in Mozambique is foreign aid, and all the new hardware belongs, in fact, to international organizations. Over a hundred organizations, including governments, religious groups, United Nations agencies, and non-governmental relief and development outfits, have projects going in Mozambique. Their employees number in the thousands; they are spending about a billion dollars a year. The East-bloc countries also have thousands of teachers, advisers, and technicians in Mozambique. Of course, Renamo recognizes the importance of foreign aid, and a captured rebel plan gives priority to stopping "the activities of foreigners because they are the most dangerous in the recovery of the economy." Hundreds of foreigners—most of them Portuguese or Soviets—have been kidnapped by Renamo; dozens have been killed. Today the war confines most foreigners to the cities.



WHISTLER'S MOTHER AT SHARKEY'S

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THE war in Mozambique is at a stalemate. Frelimo launches seasonal offensives against Renamo, but, as a Western military attaché in Maputo put it, "Renamo just moves away, like mercury when you try to catch it on the end of your pencil." The Mozambican armed forces are small (fewer than thirty thousand men) and unimposing. After independence, the new government, anticipating a South African invasion, turned the liberation army into a conventional force, relying on Soviet training and heavy weaponry. The South Africans had, after all, invaded Angola in 1975 on a grand scale. But no invasion came, and when Renamo's guerrilla-style attacks spread, Frelimo's tanks, artillery, and interceptor aircraft were of little use.

Special commandos trained in counterinsurgency by the Soviet Union and Great Britain are the present hope of the Army, but they represent only a small fraction of a small military in a large country. Most of the Mozambican Army is undertrained, under-equipped, underpaid, and underfed. The collapse of the national transportation system, together with the general lack of administrative skills, disrupts military logistics just as thoroughly as it does civilian life. Troops in the field often don't receive pay, uniforms, ammunition, or rations. Morale suffers, and when soldiers are forced to find food any way they can the Army's reputation suffers. Draft evasion is widespread, especially in the cities, and provincial commanders, who seem to be given a free hand in the raising of forces, resort to rough-and-ready conscription, which further tarnishes the Army's image.

Renamo spokesmen say that Frelimo would face defeat if it were not for the support of "foreign mercenaries," and, in fact, the assistance of Tanzania and, especially, Zimbabwe has been crucial to the government's survival. Zimbabwe may have as many as twenty thousand troops in Mozambique, most of them concentrated around the Beira Corridor—a highway, railway, and oil pipeline that connect Zimbabwe to the port at Beira. The Zimbabwe government owes its own existence partly to Frelimo's steadfast support during the liberation war in Rhodesia, so the current military assistance helps repay a historic debt. It is also essential to the Zimbabwean economy to keep the Beira Corridor open.

Because Renamo's main targets are civilians and infrastructure, its military prowess is difficult to assess. Its record of destruction is, of course, prodigious. Renamo has little, if any, heavy artillery and virtually no mechanized transport. Its communications system, however, is superior to Frelimo's. Captured radiomen describe a comprehensive system, linking all areas of the country with a shifting headquarters in central Mozambique. The headquarters is linked, in turn, with a base in South Africa by an advanced British Racal system, which shifts frequency sixteen times a minute to avoid monitoring. Renamo has been consistently able to mass large numbers of small units for attacks and disperse them rapidly for strategic retreats. Some Renamo commanders, according to reports, now communicate on solar-powered radios through laptop computers.

The notion, advanced by many observers, that Renamo violence is just "wanton barbarism" (Bob Geldof, on a heavily publicized four-day visit to Mozambique in 1987) is belied by the military facts. Even when Renamo adopted a strategy of mass terror, in the mid-nineteen-eighties, most of its brutalities had discernible motives. Someone was suspected of withholding information, or a village was suspected of withholding food, and the *bandidos* wanted to make sure the neighbors got the message. Predictably, Frelimo-created "communal villages," which were originally intended to be the centerpiece of rural development but have often been used simply to keep peasants away from Renamo, have been major Renamo targets.

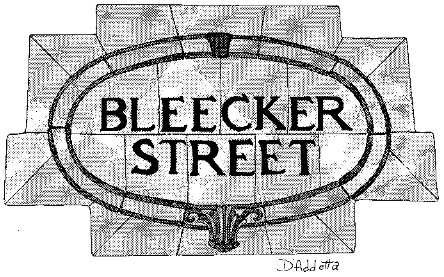
Frelimo's declared strategy for winning the war relies inordinately on an amnesty program started in December, 1987. The government claims that more than three thousand Renamo fighters have turned themselves in under the amnesty, which stipulates that they shall not be punished for their actions while they were with Renamo, but the program has had no visible effect on the war. Militarily, Frelimo's declared strategy involves cutting off military supplies to Renamo from outside the country—this interdiction seems to have met with little success—and also cutting off Renamo's food supply. Communal villages play an important role in the effort to deny food to Renamo, and so do the "accommodation centers" for *deslocados*, as I learned first from a peasant named Augusto Mainyoa.

I interviewed Mainyoa amid the ruins of the electrical power plant in Morrumbala. He was a small, thin, sad-eyed man dressed in ragged shorts and a filthy yellow sweater vest. He came from a place he called Codzombe—that was the name of the chief there. Mainyoa said he had left Codzombe because he was tired of living there. I didn't believe that. Mainyoa had a large bandage around his head and a dogged, shattered look. Moreover, when I started talking with him a local official of some kind—a stocky young man, also dressed in rags, who was helping to register *deslocados*—had approached us and, muttering uncomfortably, told me that there had apparently been some misunderstanding with this man.

Mainyoa eventually told me the story. He had actually been accosted in his fields by Frelimo soldiers. They had demanded to know what he was doing living there in the bush. Where were the bandits? Was he not collaborating with them? When Mainyoa could not answer, but said that he did not want to leave his land, the soldiers attacked him. They stabbed him with bayonets and smashed his head. Mainyoa showed me a number of fresh stab wounds on his neck and stomach. After he fainted, the soldiers took his wife and children away. Relatives found Mainyoa, and treated his wounds with traditional medicines. After three weeks, he felt well enough to travel, and came to Morrumbala. He had found his family there, safe and well, and got his head bandaged at the hospital, but he was still suffering from dizziness.

The attack on Augusto Mainyoa had not been a misunderstanding. It was, rather, part of a pattern. In some areas of the countryside, Frelimo troops seemed to suspect every resident of collaborating with Renamo. The suspicion was not, perhaps, unfounded: there were rural areas where it was apparently impossible to live *without* collaborating with Renamo. In such areas, Frelimo was, therefore, simply bringing everyone it could find into the district capitals—a rough-hewn policy, to say the least.

Hundreds of miles south of Morrumbala, in a town called Chibabava, I talked to a widow who said she had six children. But she had only one child—her youngest—with her. It seemed that she had been "captured by Frelimo," as she put it, while working in her fields with her baby on her back. She had told the soldiers about her other children, but they had refused to allow her to fetch them. Her home was at least forty miles away from Chibabava. It had been nine months since she was seized. The government was feeding her and her baby, but she had no idea what had become of her five older children.



RENAMO's leaders claim that they control more than eighty per cent of Mozambique. The claim is absurd, if only because Mozambique is far too large and undeveloped for any small group to "control" much of it. That includes the government, of course, which itself "controls" little outside the towns and cities. What fraction of the armed men roaming the countryside owe allegiance to any organization? And what fraction of those who call themselves Renamo actually take commands from Afonso Dhlakama? A wild guess on both questions might be half. In many areas, Renamo does not practice anything resembling standard guerrilla warfare; that is, it does not take and hold territory and try to provide some form of alternative administration. Instead, it engages in hit-and-run attacks, usually on nonmilitary targets, pursuing a strategy of maximum destruction and mass terror. In other areas, however, and particularly in central Mozambique, Renamo has held territory, sometimes for years at a stretch, and hundred of thousands—possibly millions—of Mozambicans today live under some form of Renamo administration.

As I travelled around the country, I became obsessed with developing an accurate picture of life with Renamo. It was an ambition sure to be frustrated, because there were countless versions of the thing, many of them contradictory, many of them purely local. Viewed through the stories of those who had survived it, life with the rebels—or *matsangas*, as they are often called, after the first Renamo leader, André Matsangaissa—became a kind of African shadow play, with a large cast of arcane and traditional characters. I imagine that the *matsanga* stories will eventually be adapted to local oral literary traditions and become formalized, but in 1988 most of them were raw and unpredictable. Politically, they are already bitterly contested terrain. Pro-Frelimo researchers return with horrifying tales of slavery, starvation, and mass murder. Pro-Renamo observers find "liberated zones" of well-fed peasants happy to be rid of Communism. Many of the stories told by both sides are true, I believe, but so is a great deal else.

The standard Renamo practice after entering an area is to loot it and kill any suspected Frelimo members or sympathizers. Usually, if plans do not call for long-term occupation, houses are burned and people marched off to Renamo bases, where they will be used as farmers or porters; or, if the plan is to stick around, the rebels reinstall the local *régulos*—the petty chiefs who once worked, basically as tax collectors, for the Portuguese, and whom Frelimo systematically deposed at independence. I heard about *régulos* who brought their colonial uniforms out of storage, dusting off the epaulets, and some who brought their old enforcers, the African policemen known as *sipais*, out of retirement.

Even more important to Renamo administration than *régulos* are traditional religious authorities. The Portuguese were not energetic missionaries in Mozambique; during their nearly five hundred years of occupation, they succeeded in converting less than fifteen per cent of the population to Catholicism. Today, the country has at least as many Muslims—most of them living along the northern coast—as Catholics. But the majority of Mozambicans are what census-takers call "animists"—a term that covers a great range of beliefs and practices. Because the Portuguese were not energetic anthropologists, either, there has been little formal study of Mozambique's indigenous religions, but religious life in rural Mozambique, like religious life everywhere in rural Africa, is definitely complex and intense. Traditional religious figures—known as *curandeiros* ("healers") or *feiticeiros* ("witch doctors")—retain great authority and prestige. Their functions range freely across modern categories: medical, political, religious, psychiatric. They are weather forecasters, marriage counsellors, insurance agents, and priests. Some are knowledgeable herbalists, others are pure fetishists. Apprenticeships are long and costly, and are often limited to persons who have survived serious illnesses themselves. *Curandeiros* were subject to less repression and manipulation under colonialism than chiefs were, so their standing with their flocks actually rose while that of the *régulos* fell. Some *curandeiros* were famous, and some urban *curandeiros*, who charged high fees for their services, became quite rich. After independence, some *curandeiros* went into government training programs and became village health workers, but Frelimo gave them no special recognition and officially scorned traditional beliefs as *obscurantismo*. Like the *régulos*, most *curandeiros* were merely pushed aside by the new government.

Renamo uses *curandeiros* both to gain the respect of peasants and to give its fighters courage. I heard stories of rebels being led into battle by a *curandeiro* waving a goat's tail and of rites meant to make warriors invisible to their enemies. Belief in magic apparently extends even to "the President of Free Mozambique," as Afonso Dhlakama styles himself. Documents found at a captured Renamo base show Dhlakama's adjutant filing straight-faced accounts of battlefield "miracles," in which helpful spirits caused Frelimo troops to shoot at one anoth-

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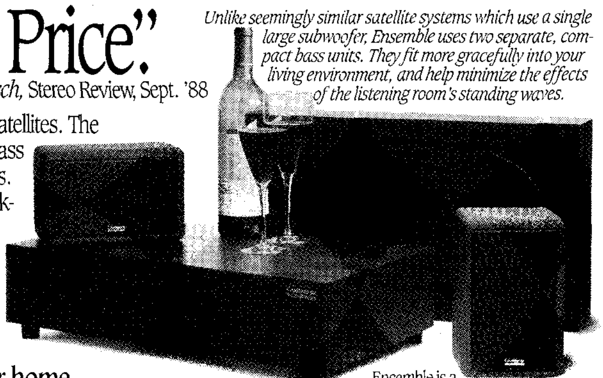

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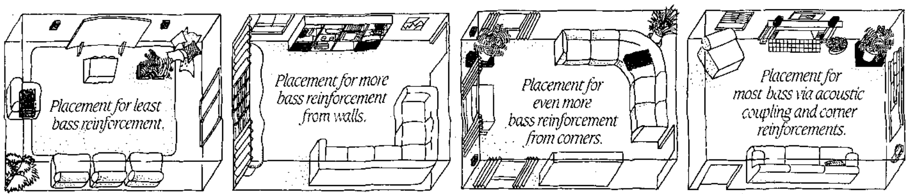
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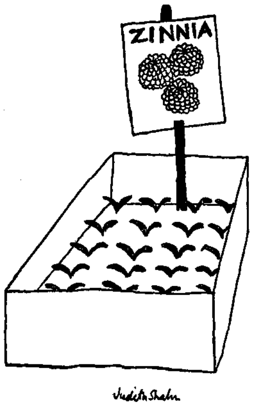
er. And Renamo's alliance with the supernatural seems to be accepted at face value by many Mozambicans. In every part of the country I visited, I heard people say that the rebels were "bulletproof," that they were "immortal."

Some of this belief is related to the awe in which Ndau-speaking people are held. The Ndaus are one of the smaller ethnic groups in Mozambique, but they have a big reputation for magic and bellicosity. Their homeland is a narrow belt across the waist of Mozambique, from the Zimbabwe border to the sea. Frelimo never really made it to Ndau country, either before or after independence, so it was a natural base for Renamo's early operations. Ndau-speakers have dominated the Renamo military leadership from the start. Afonso Dhlakama is the son of an important Ndau chief.

I went to Ndau country—to Chibabava, which is Afonso Dhlakama's home district—and the *deslocados* I interviewed there were among the most isolated people I've ever met. None of them had been to school. None of them knew how old they were. I asked a woman if there had been any whites in the area she came from. She told the interpreter, "The first time in my life I saw a white person is today. I am very surprised." Nobody knew who the President of Mozambique was. I had travelled to Chibabava partly in hopes of learning more about Ndau culture and religion. On that score, the trip was a bust. The people I interviewed looked at me as if I were slow. Yes, they went to the *curandeiro*—if they were sick, and if they could afford it. Yes, the *matsangas* no doubt went to the *curandeiro* as well. But that was their business, wasn't it? As for the *feiticeiro*—well, his trade was in spells, a subject which only a fool would discuss. And the ancestral spirits would undoubtedly prefer that we left them out of it, too. On the differences between Ndau beliefs and other people's beliefs, the Ndaus had little to say: they didn't *know* any other types of people.



The anti-Ndau feeling that I expected to find elsewhere in Mozambique I never found. The loyalty of Ndau-speakers was not an issue even in the Army, I was told. That some Ndaus were *bandidos* did not reflect badly on the others—other ethnic groups were also involved. In fact, the *curandeiros* working with Renamo are often not Ndau. *Curandeiros* are powerful in every region of Mozambique, and the war, by generating so much anxiety and grief, clearly increases the demand for the solace and guidance of their magic.

And it is not only illiterate peasants who believe. I heard stories about the spirits from schoolteachers and from air-traffic controllers. It was a teacher, in fact, who first told me the legend surrounding the death of André Matsangaissa. Matsangaissa was killed during an attack on a government position near Gorongosa, in central Mozambique. According to the legend, Matsangaissa was first shot, point-blank, with an automatic rifle, *but he was not harmed.* Then he was shot with a bazooka. That killed him, but the man who fired the bazooka later went mad, the victim of a Renamo witch's spell. The teacher who told me this story had seen *curandeiros* washing the bodies of Renamo fighters with herbs before battles. One of the ways Renamo sought to preserve its reputation for being bulletproof, he said, was by going to great lengths after battles to drag away its dead and bury them secretly. Of course, Frelimo soldiers, most of whom are peasants themselves, also believe in magic, and in March, 1988, in a notorious case, two local officials in Beira killed two old women who were accused of casting spells.

Renamo's entente with traditional structures is sometimes mistaken for the restoration of a pre-colonial order, a "cashless society," to the Mozambican countryside. The war has even been characterized, here and there, as a crusade by African traditionalists against a modern state. In truth, the uprooting of millions of peasants by Renamo has sown only profound disorder. Until a few years ago, Renamo's external wing proudly published the number of villages it had destroyed—in 1981 it claimed to have destroyed eight hundred and three, in 1982 six hundred and seven. The decisive factors in Renamo's dealings with civilians are always the rebels' military aims, not the welfare of the peasants. And the alliances with *régulos* and *curandeiros* are the same. When disputes arise between Renamo and local authorities—as they always will where large numbers of unproductive men are living among people with little to spare—they are settled, inevitably, by the guns of the armed party. Indeed, the death of André Matsangaissa is popularly attributed to the bad advice of a famous wizard who, disgruntled with Renamo's depredations among his people, told Matsangaissa that the government position at Gorongosa was undefended.

Estimates of the number of full-time Renamo soldiers range from eight thousand to twenty-five thousand. A handful have been fighting for twenty years or more, since the early days of the war for independence. These include veterans of the Portuguese colonial army as well as Frelimo deserters. Many fighters were recruited in South Africa, most of them Mozambicans who were arrested and given the unhappy choice of prison or military training. Renamo does a great deal of press-ganging itself, taking men and boys from among its captives for military training. Former Renamo soldiers report being forced to kill civilians as part of their "initiation." Once they've committed murder, they become convinced that they can never be readmitted to civil society, which naturally binds them to their new peer group: Renamo. The fear that Frelimo will kill them if they are captured is apparently widespread among Renamo fighters.

What percentage of Renamo fighters are volunteers? Renamo's spokesmen say they all are, naturally. William Minter, an American researcher, recently concluded, on the basis of thirty-two interviews with amnestied and captured fighters, that over ninety per cent of Renamo's soldiers were forcibly recruited. A high-level Renamo defector who ran a Renamo radio station in South Africa until 1984 says that *all* of his black colleagues there had been kidnapped. As Minter acknowledges, however, his interviews were arranged through the Frelimo Central Committee, and the defector is under Frelimo's protection. Both the defector and the amnestied and captured fighters know, without necessarily having to be told, that the government prefers the kidnapping version of the Renamo recruitment story. A Mozambican researcher who is himself close to the Frelimo Central Committee told me that he believed that the majority of Renamo soldiers were volunteers. And it does defy common sense that an army of captives would fight as fiercely as Renamo is often reported to do.

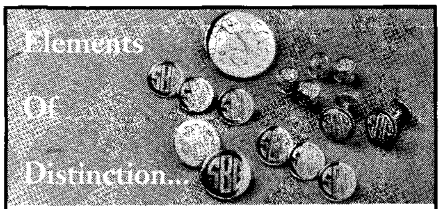
Mozambique has a large and growing population of the absolutely marginalized—people with no skills, education, jobs, homes, or future. They are a fertile field for Renamo recruitment, constantly watered by the government's inability to help them. Since the war is the main cause of the collapse of the economy, the war ends up reproducing itself. An economy of pillage has developed alongside the economy of production, and the opportunities in the former are, for some people, simply greater than in the latter. Also, quite apart from the war, many Mozambicans blame the government for the economy's decline. And Frelimo's mistakes have certainly made Renamo's work easier. One such mistake was Operation Production, in which fifty thousand unemployed city dwellers were summarily shipped to the countryside in 1983 and told to start farming. Mozambicans immediately dubbed Operation Production "a recruiting program for the bandits," and it does seem to have been effective as exactly that.

Besides the *régulos* and *curandeiros*, there are many peasants, businessmen, clans, and even whole age groups who have felt that they lost out somewhere in the various redistributions of power and wealth since independence. The Frelimo deserters to Renamo include people who, like André Matsangaissa and Afonso Dhlakama, believed after independence that they were entitled to more spoils of war than their superiors would allow them, and others bearing more recent grudges. Some of the losers in local elections to the national assembly, for instance, have gone off and joined Renamo. From its origins as a puppet group, Renamo has evolved into a broad, violent collection of Frelimo's enemies.

But perhaps the commonest reason for joining Renamo—and certainly the commonest reason for joining the many independent groups of *real* bandits—is hunger: with a gun in hand, one's chances of eating in rural Mozambique are clearly better than they are without it.

Finally, one of the dirty secrets of the war is the suspicion that being a *bandido* might be fun. I heard about an Angolan mechanic who was captured by Renamo and spent many months repairing the rebels' motorcycles. After he escaped, he reported that the rebels he had lived with were having themselves a hell of a time. They stole motorcycles, used the oil to fashion natty dreadlocks, got high on marijuana and drunk on traditional beer, and spent their days roaring around homemade racetracks in the bush. When they smashed up the bikes, he was made to fix them. These were illiterate country boys who, if they had not joined Renamo, were probably looking at a career behind a hoe, a life of tedium and deprivation perhaps relieved only by long, dangerous stints in the Army, where the fun quotient was reported to be nil. (Frelimo strongly disapproves of marijuana, while Renamo tolerates and even institutionalizes its use.) Another story I heard came from the survivors of an attack—twenty-one people died in it—on a town near Maputo. It seemed that when the rebels attacked they caught everybody off guard except a large contingent of local teen-age boys, who greeted the invaders enthusiastically, joined in the looting of their neighbors' houses, and, richer by many radios and bicycles, retreated to the bush with Renamo.

But the nature of the war is so different from region to region that it may be misleading to write about "Renamo." In Zambézia, the level of military organization is high. The rebels operate at batallion strength, build major bases, and have held towns for long periods. Meanwhile, in other areas, Renamo is represented by small, roving bands whose relationship to any central command is distant at best. Massacres all seem to happen in the south of the country. People in the center and the north consistently denied that Renamo commits massacres there. Many who had lived with Renamo claimed never to have seen any violence against civilians. A village health worker in northern Zambézia who had spent a year with Renamo told me that the only violence he saw in that time, besides the beating of a



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captive who attempted to escape, was the punishment of Renamo soldiers. For mistakes in battle, or for attempts to desert, he said—and I heard this from a number of people—Renamo soldiers were often executed. The health worker, whose recollections of life with Renamo were unusually thorough, was an *amnistiado*. He said he had never carried a gun, and had escaped from Renamo at the first opportunity, so I could not understand why he had had to be amnestied. After the interview, Dividas laughed at me. "Of course he carried a gun," he said.

RENAMO is first and foremost a military organization. Its political structure, where it exists at all, is minimal. In a few areas, Renamo has gained local support by killing unpopular administrators or managers, but once it gains control of an area it apparently delivers few, if any, services. Some former captives recall attending compulsory political meetings, at which opposition to Frelimo and its works was the sole theme, but none whom I spoke with—or have heard of—report any effort to build a consensus, or to consult with ordinary people, on any issue. The movement is authoritarian to an extreme degree. Its founders and leaders all have military and police backgrounds, and the political understanding of both fighters and collaborators, the great majority of whom are illiterate, apparently hovers near zero. The Renamo flag, which looks as if it were concocted in Pretoria, features five downward-pointing arrows over the slogan "War and Death to the Enemies of the Fatherland." Renamo's connection to South Africa seems to be widely understood in the south of Mozambique, but as one moves north that understanding fades steadily. Outside the cities, few people in northern Mozambique know that South Africa exists, and fewer still have heard of something called apartheid. Those who have heard of South Africa seem to associate it with, above all, material wealth. There is no equivalent in Mozambique of the minstrels who ride the trains and buses in North Africa singing for their supper about the suffering of the Palestinians.

"Freedom of religion" is a Renamo slogan, and the rebels' treatment of priests and missionaries has usually been respectful. In many destroyed towns, the only building left unscathed has been the church. In some cases, Catholic priests have remained under Renamo, conducting business as usual, and a number of intrepid Protestant missionaries, including some Americans, are apparently working in Renamo territory today. But the Catholic Church and some of the evangelical Protestant sects have often been, at least until recently, unhappy with Frelimo, which after independence closed religious schools and hospitals and even confiscated church property. And Renamo's warm relations with certain priests and missionaries may be, like the alliances with *régulos* and *curandeiros*, more convenient than immutable.

Renamo, through its European and American spokesmen, claims to run schools and clinics in the areas it controls. I visited an area in northern Sofala where the rebels claimed to be operating dozens of schools, but when I asked people there who had lived with Renamo about the schools they stared at me in disbelief. I did find one place, farther north, where Renamo soldiers had urged the teachers among their captives to start classes again. They had no materials, no classrooms—they were living deep in the bush—but the teachers I interviewed said the Renamo soldiers used to come and sit at a respectful distance from the classes they convened under the trees. The soldiers were illiterate, in awe of education, and did not speak Portuguese, so they apparently never grasped that the teachers had resumed their work using the hated Frelimo curriculum.

The violent hostility of Renamo toward such symbols of modernity as schools, hospitals, and machinery feeds the idea that the movement is traditionalist, or simply anti-urban. It is a bent that would make sense in much of Africa, where ancient and modern worlds collide daily, and the ancient usually gets the worst of it, and where the cities, the government's crucial constituency, prey voraciously on the countryside. In the matter of clinics and hospitals, there is the possibility that the *curandeiros* working with Renamo consider modern medicine to be the competition, cutting into their business as traditional healers. But the fact is that when the rebels loot clinics they always take the medicine for their own use, and when they kidnap health workers they always put them to work behind Renamo lines teaching others the mysteries of their craft.

What is so hateful about schools and clinics from Renamo's point of view is that they are identified with Frelimo. They are, in fact, among the main sources of the government's popularity. That is why they must be destroyed. The destruction of machinery is less symbolic, but the intent is the same: to make the Frelimo-run society less desirable. It's a maximalist strategy, and a pure equation: whatever weakens Frelimo strengthens Renamo.

IDENTIFYING Renamo's ideology is not a task for the fainthearted. The movement is often tagged "right-wing rebels" in the international press. The editors of the London *Times* call it "pro-Western." But few of the illiterate peasants who fight with Renamo are likely to think of themselves as right-wing, and those good Londoners who believe that Renamo is pro-Western should glance through the literature coming out of Renamo's London office, which takes Western corporations (at least, those investing in Mozambique) to task in terms as blistering as any that Frelimo ever mustered. The same literature pledges to "support all progressive forces within Mozambique" and, for good measure, rails against "apartheid oppression" in "racist South Africa," while condemning what it has the brass to call "Frelimo's alliance with Pretoria." Renamo's spokesmen hawk their movement's commitment to "free enterprise," but the *matsangas* attack privately owned factories and farms just as readily as they attack publicly owned property.

What does Renamo want? Afonso Dhlakama: "Democractic government, freedom of movement, freedom of religion, and the freedom to eat." Dhlakama has often predicted imminent military victory, but Renamo has never actually been close to winning the war—to taking Maputo and Beira—if only because its lack of air defenses would make holding the cities impossible. A high-level Renamo defector told me in Maputo that he was told by a South African colonel in 1983 that Pretoria had no wish to change the government of Mozambique, but simply to "put Machel on his knees." According to the defector, Renamo leaders who understood that Pretoria's plans gave them no chance of winning the war, and who began trying to cultivate new backers in Washington and Paris by promising to break with Pretoria, developed a habit of dying violently—"destabilization" may be a game with limited objectives, but Pretoria plays it seriously. Renamo's handlers are in a position to know, in any case, that the rebels would be incapable of governing a country. As it is, the war in Mozambique is inexpensive, at whatever level South Africa still funds it, while a counter-insurgency war—thousands of Frelimo guerrillas would undoubtedly go back to the bush if the government should be overthrown—could quickly become South Africa's Vietnam.

In an interview last year, Dhlakama shifted position. "Our aim is not to win the war militarily," he said, "but to force Frelimo to accept negotiations for a democratically elected government." Frelimo's position is "Negotiate with whom?" The government derides Dhlakama as a powerless puppet, and the rebel chief is, in truth, no one's idea of a charismatic politician. He is poorly educated—he attended a rural Catholic mission school—and unworldly. Dhlakama's skills, such as they exist, are entirely military. What he really wants may be straightforward: power. His chances of getting it by election are small. And the chances of a multiparty election in Mozambique any time soon are probably smaller.

What Renamo's various foreign backers want is a question with too many answers, most of them contradictory, and that helps explain the homicidal disarray of the movement's external wing. Along with the Portuguese revanchists, American extremists, and elements of the South African military, there are several Western intelligence services that are persistently reported to retain strong contacts with Renamo, including the West Germans, the Israelis, and, in apparent defiance of official American policy, elements of our own C.I.A. and Defense Intelligence Agency.

What do the rebels themselves want? Because Renamo has no real prospects of taking power nationally, the thousands of *matsangas* have thousands of different, more immediate agendas. This deep political incoherence undermines Renamo's claim to be a nationalist movement just as seriously as the group's puppet beginnings and continuing shady international connections do. It also strengthens the government's argument that the conflict in Mozambique is not a civil war. Other governments in Africa have alienated large parts of their own populations; Mozambique's unique misfortune has been to live next door to a regime ready and able to organize its malcontents and finance its destruction.

What about "the people," the hapless millions caught, as they say in Africa, between the snakes and the lion? They are, after all, the ostensible judges—or, in another view, the prizes—of the contest. Everywhere I went in Mozambique, I heard, "All the peasants really want is to be left alone." I also heard it said that in the areas Renamo controls it gains popular support by running a "minimalist administration"—in contrast to Frelimo's revolutionary activism. But the State Department's report, based on refugees' accounts, makes Renamo administration sound, at least in what its author describes as "control areas," extraordinarily repressive. "The only reciprocity the captives appear to receive or to expect is the opportunity to remain alive," the report laconically concludes. My own interviews with people who had lived with Renamo also evoked a brutal, arbitrary system, but the State Department's tone, which conjured up great slave camps, seemed wrong. The tone of the stories I heard was more modest, more African. Someone's father was kidnapped. The family knew where he was being held, and they knew the ransom would be two shirts. While the family were trying to find the shirts, he was moved farther away. Now they don't know where he is. All those who had lived with Renamo talked about hunger, but usually that was why they had left Renamo territory. The International

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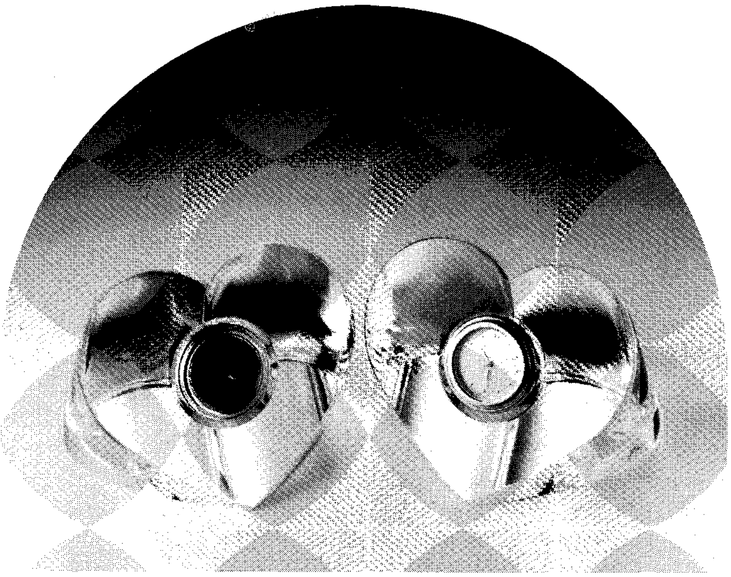
Committee of the Red Cross started flying into Renamo areas in 1988, and its teams found that the greatest needs there were for seeds and medicine. Food was not an immediate problem.

The cruel truth is that Mozambique's peasants have never been left alone. Autocratic chiefs and kings, slave traders, tax collectors, plantation owners, ten-family Party cells, and now Renamo have all seen to that. The history of Mozambique's peasantry is one of bottomless pain and sorrow, and its store of rage is today being used, cynically and savagely, to destroy the country's future.

BUT it's difficult to reconcile such ferocity with the land that presents itself to a visitor. For, despite all the carnage and anarchy that fill the newspapers and hospitals and refugee camps, there are many areas of Mozambique that appear to enjoy a high degree of social peace. The level of distrust and paranoia among strangers is markedly lower than in many other parts of Africa (let alone somewhere like New York City). Warm, civilized exchange is the norm. This paradox haunted me everywhere I went, but nowhere more so than in the district of Ile.

Like many places in Mozambique, the Ile district, in northern Zambézia, is beautiful in the piercing way of imperilled things. Errego, the district capital, is built on a ridge, with tremendous rocks, hundreds of feet high, rising all around it. A park and a playground fill the center of the town, and a wide esplanade lined with trees—eucalyptus, palms, acacias, flamboyants—runs from the pink, tile-roofed hospital, which looks like a miniature Italian palace, to the administrator's house, a grand structure that was roofless and gutted by the time I got there. Renamo had overrun and briefly occupied Errego three times in the previous two years, destroying three tea factories, several schools, and all the machinery at a local coal mine. Ours was the first airplane Ile had seen in a month. No road traffic had reached the area in more than a year. Food and clothes were scarce. There were three hundred thousand people in the Ile district; Errego alone had more than twenty-three thousand *deslocados*.

Dividas and I spent most of our day in Ile interviewing *deslocados*. Just as we had started talking with a doughty



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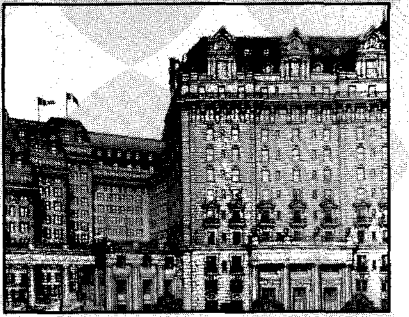

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young mother named Elena Adriano, a boy came running up, saying that the *cargueiro* was at the airstrip. The airstrip was six miles away. Our instructions from Hennie and Ferdie had been to rush to the strip as soon as we heard the plane returning, but we hadn't heard the plane. I doubted we could have missed it. But it was midafternoon. I ran for the administrator's Land Rover. Dividas was reluctant to abandon Elena—his wife is named Elena, and the coincidence delighted him. As we tore out of the camp, he called, "*Ciao*, Elena!" And he was still grinning a minute later when one of our fellow-passengers spotted a DC-3 high in the sky, headed south.

We pulled over. It was definitely Little Annie, droning through the puffball clouds. I jumped out and started waving my arms. Eight or ten local people who had been riding with us were hugely amused. I asked one of them to take off his shirt, which was white, and I waved it. The plane did not change course. I watched it recede until there was no doubt left. The others tried to stifle their laughter. Even Dividas seemed amused. He shrugged. "They'll come back," he said. "They'll make a special trip."

Our host that day was an unassuming, serious young assistant administrator named Jamar Romão. When I asked Romão about the fate of the hundreds of people from Errego who had been kidnapped by Renamo—they included the town's postmaster—he said that he could be certain only about what befell them during the first weeks, because after that his own wife and children had escaped, and few others had returned in the two years since. But, he said quietly, his wife and children had told some terrible stories.

Romão had been overjoyed to see the food we brought to Ile. He was going to send it immediately to a place called Mulevala, he said, which had been liberated by Frelimo less than two weeks before. The people there were starving. But Mulevala was more than a hundred kilometres away, and local men were going to be carrying the food there on their heads, so first they would have to tear each of the big, fifty-kilogram sacks in half, then sew each half closed.

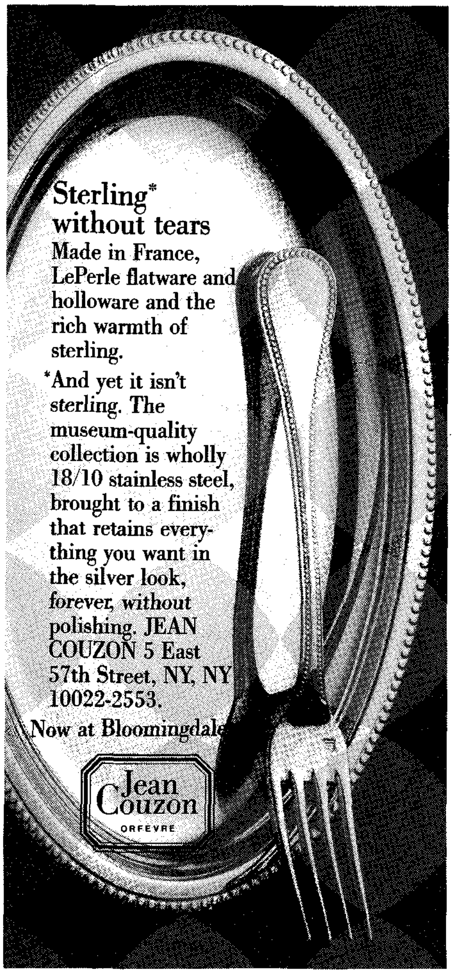
Since fuel was precious in Ile—Dividas and I had brought a drum of diesel from Quelimane, which had gone into the district's two working vehicles—we proceeded to the airstrip. It was on a wide plateau surrounded by dark, brushy hills. Hundreds of people were there, still milling excitedly after the departure of the Dakota. The district's one truck was already loaded with the latest delivery. But Romão was nonplussed to hear that the sacks contained maize. The only thing Ile did not need was maize, he said. He had sent that message to Calamidades in Quelimane every chance he got. There was a white face in the airstrip crowd—an Italian priest. He was deeply tanned and wore his hair in a homemade crewcut. He told Romão that the Dakota's pilots had indicated that they would return for us.

We had several hours, at least, to wait. There was a thatch-roofed lean-to at the edge of the airstrip, which turned out to be, on closer inspection, a school. Most of the five hundred schools still functioning in Zambézia had, according to the provincial director of education in Quelimane, no materials whatever—they consisted of a teacher and students meeting under a tree—but the school at the airstrip in Ile had a roof and some rudimentary benches. Class was out, but six or eight children were shyly watching Dividas and me from across the road. We sat down on a grassy bank, they drew closer, and Dividas asked them their names.

There were Luísa Sábado and Victoria Viegas and Zeca Vidro. All but the smallest children spoke some Portuguese. They learned it in school, they said. Dividas asked who among them was the best student. They giggled and squirmed, and Zeca, a thin boy with huge eyes, was finally nominated. Dividas asked who the best soccer player was. More giggling, more squirming, and another boy was pointed out. Dividas asked to see the school-exercise book that Luísa, an angel-faced thirteen-year-old, was carrying. With painful reluctance, she handed it over. It was a geography workbook, tattered from what looked like use by several predecessors. It had scenes of karate fighting drawn on the cover in a childish hand, with the caption "The Five Masters of Xao-Lin." "The Five Masters of Xao-Lin," Luísa mumbled, studying her bare feet desperately, was a movie she had seen in Gurué. Gurué, the capital of a prosperous tea-growing district, was about fifty miles north of Ile. She had travelled there by bus, Luísa said, long ago, when the roads were open. It was the farthest she had ever been from Ile. Yes, she would love to see Quelimane someday. And Maputo. She wanted to go to secondary school. Dividas asked when she planned to marry, and Luísa said, "When I am nineteen." She tried to suppress a smile, but that looked difficult to do; her lips had two or three extra flutings, for maximum expressiveness. Their expression in repose was a gentle, precocious irony. Dividas asked Luísa if she had heard of America, and she whispered, "No." None of the children had.

Did the children want to hear a story? They did. By this time, a number of people had collected around the edges of our group, including a noisy older man—"drunk from *aguardente*," Victoria Viegas whispered to me—who sat nearby and tried to get the children to listen to *him* rather than to this stranger in the clean white cap. But the children listened to Dividas. His first story was called "How the Pig Got a Flat Nose." It was a variation on the Icarus myth. The pig had always wanted to fly, so his friend the eagle made him a pair of wings out of wax. After ignoring the eagle's advice and flying too close to the sun and losing one of his wings, the pig careered through the sky with his remaining wing, out of control, for several minutes, thrilling the children of Ile, before he finally lost it, too, and crashed to earth, nose first.

Next, Dividas told "Why the Crocodile Eats People." It was a much sadder story. While Crocodilo was liv-



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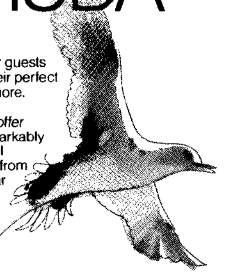

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ing peacefully on the riverbank, some people suddenly came and took three of her *crianças* (babies). She went to the village the next day to find them. The villagers were having a big party. To her horror, Crocodilo saw that the people had baked one of her *crianças* and were eating it. She could not see her other *crianças*, and she could not approach, because of the party. She enlisted the help of a hen, and the hen reported that the others were still alive. The next day, Crocodilo returned, hoping to rescue them, but now the hen told her that her two remaining children had also been killed. Crocodilo went back to the riverbank heartbroken and enraged. Her revenge, she vowed, would be to eat the next person she saw.

While Dividas was telling these stories, I noticed an infant whose mother had drawn close to listen. Although the mother looked healthy, the baby was clearly suffering from severe malnutrition. It was extremely scrawny, with lots of loose, grayish skin and a frightening, monkeylike look. It was a look that I had seen on a number of infants in Zambézia. The baby was clinging to its mother's breast, but it was obviously finding no nourishment there. Its chances of surviving another year were, I guessed, poor to nil. The mother noticed me watching her, and looked alarmed. I turned away, and studied the children sitting on the ground around us. Most of them were painfully thin. Victoria's wrists were tiny. Several of the children had the potbellies that meant either malnutrition or parasites, and one boy was missing an eye. But none of them were starving, as far as I could tell. All of them had probably lost friends or neighbors or family members to hunger or the war, but as they listened to Dividas they looked so lovely, so unbrutalized, so oblivious of everything else, including the spectral infant sucking frantically behind them, that I found I had, at least temporarily, lost all interest in discovering the details of their hard times.

As Dividas came to the end of "Why the Crocodile Eats People," a teen-age girl dressed in a loud, new turquoise dress and white platform shoes walked past, laughing raucously. Her clothes were wildly out of place in Ile, and Dividas asked Luísa if the girl was, by any chance, "a friend of the director of Calamidades." Luísa laughed. She was indeed, Luísa said. Luísa herself wore shapeless gray rags full of holes through which her breasts, despite her best efforts, kept falling. Some of the younger children wore nothing but scraps of burlap.

Dividas and I dug through our bags and came up with half a dozen ballpoint pens. We started handing them out. Each child who received one would pull off the cap and slide out the cartridge to check the ink level, while the others cheered or hooted, depending on what was revealed. Luísa got the last pen, and she let the tension build as she slowly withdrew the cartridge. It turned out to be full to the brim. The other children screamed with glee and envy, and Luísa whispered, "God is great."

Hennie and Ferdie returned, dangerously late in the day, bringing yet another load of unneeded maize. The children of Ile ran out to the plane with their tin cans, and the last I saw of them they were darting under the district's truck to snatch the stray kernels that fell from the sacks.

That evening, I asked Dividas about the prospects of a Luísa Sábado. Would she really be able to go to secondary school? "If this war ends, yes," he said. "But she must be able to leave that area. Even just to go to Gurué. She doesn't like the clothes she has. You can see that. She wants a new dress. She says she doesn't want to marry until she is nineteen, but if some boy just a little bit clever, who perhaps works at the hospital, offers her a new dress, she may go with him. Then, if she gets pregnant, the parents will get involved, a marriage will be arranged, and her education will be finished. Or if she gets a new dress from Calamidades some soldier might notice her and start to give her little things. And if she gets pregnant with him he may not marry her. She is too isolated. Many people in this country are too isolated. Luísa's world is small now, because of the war." —William Finnegan

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)

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In Richard Meltzer's item on romantic dining in last week's restaurant guide, the sentence "Loneness enfolds me like Mr. Pastafagiolio's gummy aperture on my prong" should have read "Loneness enfolds me like *Ms.* Pastafagiolio's gummy aperture on my prong." The *Weekly* regrets the error.—*L.A. Weekly.*

And Meltzer's fans can breathe easier.

DANCING

Victory

New York City Ballet’s resurgence during the first two weeks of the spring season has been remarkable. After an opening night sluggish both onstage and in the pit, the company rose gradually to its true level, showing great dancing in great ballets as a matter of course. On short notice, Darci Kistler made her début in “Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2,” twice substituting for Merrill Ashley, who was injured. Kistler was not tentative in the part; she was, in fact, extraordinary—fearless, humbly accountable, beautiful to look upon. But I took no notes; the whole performance hadn’t quite surfaced, or it may be that the role isn’t quite the right one for Kistler. Kyra Nichols danced “Mozartiana” on the same high, beclouded plane as last season. What is it in the role that doesn’t work for her? The spirituality? The phrasing? All the pride and energy of a great dancer are on display in a brilliant, closed performance, so complete in its every solution as to appear perfect. Then, in “Donizetti Variations,” Nichols went beyond perfection. She frolicked in green pastures; she let us see more of her at work—let us in on a few secrets. She was mettlesome and alluringly cocky, and her correctness was just part of her allure—not the story of the ballet. Later that week, she rolled through the “Tchaikovsky Concerto” like a field marshal with endless reserves of power. She claimed victory after victory; her every exit left the stage burning. But the forcefulness and sweep that she brings to this ballet don’t win in “Mozartiana.”

When Kistler took over “Mozartiana” (she and Nichols exchanged roles), she didn’t appear to have nailed every problem in advance, and she was wonderful. More than any other Balanchine role, “Mozartiana” exposes dancing as process. Created on Suzanne Farrell, it gives the ballerina a certain freedom of choice—it’s a living dialogue between the dancer and the choreographer. The heart of it is the long pas de deux, which Balanchine arranged to the violin cadenza. Those scarily extended, tenuously supported promenades have no predictable shape or outcome that an audience can spot and applaud. Timing, balance, and line are continually at risk, and Kistler kept them that way. Without being careless—taking, indeed, infinite care—she let dancing happen, let steps grow and diminish, punctuation fall lightly and naturally on the music. Kistler has a fine ear and a nose for danger, and for her allotted two performances she had the expert partnering of Ib Andersen. It wasn’t because of any inadequacy on her part or his that one watched knowing how much more of “Mozartiana” there was for them to invent. “Mozartiana” is like that; within its technically restricted compass, it gives dancers room to create it at every performance.

Kistler’s fresh, new “Mozartiana” was the climax of a first week crowded with events. Dancers who had been absent for all or most of the winter season returned in good form: Andersen, Maria Calegari, Robert La Fosse, Peter Boal. The orchestra, under Robert Irving or Gordon Boelzner, woke up and made music. “Episodes” had Judith Fugate in the Symphony and Wendy Whelan in the Concerto—the Allegra Kent role—to add to the already outstanding work of Helene Alexopoulous and Leonid Kozlov in the Five Pieces. Calegari was back and glowing in the Ricercare. But the old Paul Taylor solo as danced by Peter Frame gets longer and more etiolated every time I see it. (An experiment to begin with, it might reasonably make way for another experiment—the casting of a Taylor dancer in the part.) Sometimes the audience got restless, pardonably in “Episodes.” The orchestra once or twice dropped its cues or sounded overmiked. But the company hasn’t given us a Balanchine festival like this since the first couple of seasons after his death.

And then came “Danses Concertantes.” With Boelzner conducting the Stravinsky score, with Kistler and La Fosse in the principal roles, with adroit casting (of women especially) in the four trios, and with the Eugene Berman décor re-created by David Mitchell and lit by Mark Stanley, the company succeeded where Balanchine himself had failed, in bringing back to life one of his important ballets of the forties. “Danses Concertantes,” so tight, crabbed, and sour in the seventies, emerges on the brink of the nineties a compact, densely scintillating little masterpiece. The dances have no filler in them anywhere, and, with Berman’s dazzling costumes glutting the eye, they’re a bit hard to take in at first sight. But they seem to have more space to bounce around in than they had before. Though the enlarged and repainted set helps, it’s the enlarged capacities of the dancers and their heightened self-confidence that make the real difference. This is a thoroughly grown-up, uninhibited “Danses Concertantes,” a screwball comedy of a ballet, more in keeping, it seems, with our vision of the forties than with the forties’ vision of itself. Edwin Denby in 1944 called the ballet a “garden pastoral” and invoked the spirit of Henry James. Maybe elegance always looks a half century out of date. But the ballet is no less adventurous now than it was then. As Denby also said, the more you look, the more you see. And the more you feel the power of the elastic rhythm that binds everything together. Stravinsky’s rhythm is partly heard and partly unheard. Balanchine must have loved working on those alternating currents. In this piece he buzzes back and forth so happily you can feel his pleasure over a distance of forty-five years.

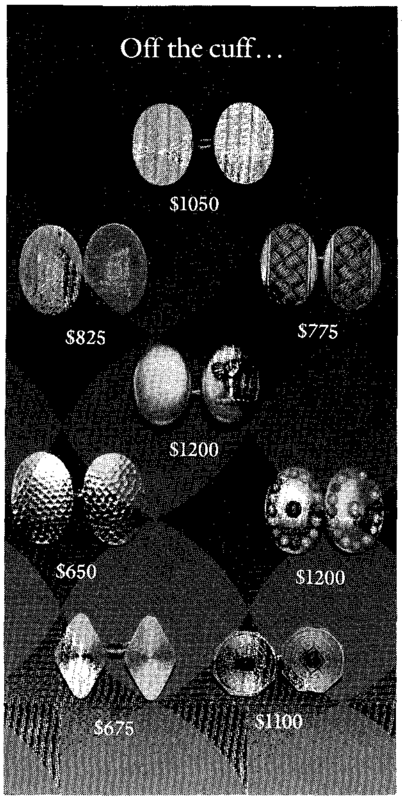
“Danses Concertantes” was the link between “Jeu de Cartes” (1937) and “Agon” (1957), and the forerunner of “Rubies” (1967). If Balanchine had been able to keep it in repertory all those years, maybe “Rubies” would have been different or wouldn’t have been made at all. But *some* Stravinsky piece would certainly have been part of “Jewels.” Balanchine, like Stravinsky, was a tireless self-synthesizer, and he knew how to extract ballets from Stravinsky’s concert music. The composer’s reaction wasn’t always benign. He enjoyed “Balustrade,” made in 1941 from the violin concerto. But though Balanchine had a different impression, Stravinsky insisted that “Danses Concertantes” had not been composed with a ballet in mind: “This is not to say that the *Danses* are unacceptable as ballet music, but only that I do not like or think of them as such; and I must confess that though I liked the décors, by Eugene Berman, the ballet is not among my Balanchine favorites." One need look no further for an explanation of why Balanchine waited until the year after the composer's death to attempt a revival.

"Danses Concertantes" comes to us from an era when people assumed that distinguished choreography to distinguished music would be seen in distinguished scenery and costumes. Berman provided a forecurtain giving the ballet's credits and a backcloth that pays homage to other Stravinsky ballets and their designers. Executed in white calligraphy on sooty black, it depicts a balustrade flanked by tiers of opera boxes, echoing both Tchelitchew's "Balustrade" and Picasso's "Pulcinella." The rich costumes, in primary colors with black calligraphy, reverse the priorities of the set and are pure Bermanesque commedia dell'arte. The colors of Harlequin's motley are distributed among the personnel of the ballet: soft green for the first trio, blue for the second, grape for the third, and plum red for the fourth. The lead couple come in pale and deep yellows. The men wear wide clowns' ruffs, beanies, and gloves. The women are costumed in short full tutus, feathery epaulets, and headpieces with perky small feathers. Their choreography is based on ballet's idea of Columbine, whose lover was Harlequin, and whose sign was the dove. They speak a kind of neoclassical bird language, not with their arms (as in "Swan Lake") but with their legs and torsos, dipping into deep arabesque, preening, picking their way here and there on point.

The ballerina role, originally tailored to the looks and style of Alexandra Danilova, requires a gift for long-legged elegant stalkings, for imperious mischief, for warmhearted womanly chic. The man's role (which may owe something to the Joker in "Jeu de Cartes" and to the style of Danilova's partner, Frederic Franklin) is that of a breezy extrovert. Tanaquil LeClercq and Jerome Robbins would have been perfectly cast in the fifties. The two roles were very likely reshaped by Balanchine in the light of "Rubies." Kistler and La Fosse don't need to have danced "Rubies"—La Fosse never has danced it; Kistler may have done it once or twice a while ago—in order to feel the connections in the material. Logical heirs to a tradition, they dance their "new" ballet as securely as if it were an old N.Y.C.B. specialty, which in a sense it is. There are things in "Danses Concertantes" that go as far back as "Apollo" and as far ahead as "Violin Concerto," the 1972 remake of "Balustrade."

The première wasn't the last of a fortnight's string of revelations. Two performances of the "Tchaikovsky Concerto" ended the second week. Ashley came on in both and reached a kind of sanctity rare in the career of any artist, unparalleled in her own. Harassed as she is these days by injuries, she could have been expected to glide through the piece, revisiting the scene of old triumphs. Instead, she danced the whole concerto in a state of pure and fervent grace, so far into the music and away from the usual performance strategies as to seem transfigured. Why do we love Balanchine? Because he makes possible this condition of absolute transparency, this state of oneness with music. And ballerinas are best who can throw themselves away and find that condition, that inner equilibrium which brings bliss to an audience. In the second of the Ashley performances, the company seemed to have caught on to what she was doing. There was sensitive accompaniment by a new pianist, James Winn. Adam Lüders partnered with sympathy and danced his own part with quiet conviction. Nichol Hlinka was superbly Tolstoyan as the second ballerina, with Jeffrey Edwards and Ben Huys as her perfectly matched companions. What a ballet it is, and what a world of feeling it conjures: pain and sorrow, joy, good cheer, life as it is dreamed of, the hardness of life as it is lived. The world of Balanchine is not shallow fantasy. Ashley showed us its tragic seriousness. Yet at the moment in the "Concerto" that has always seemed to me the most tragic of all, when the ballerina stands alone center stage while the company flows around her on all sides—at that moment, Ashley stood there smiling. This is all there is, that smile said. No mask, no martyrdom, no protest. This is why I dance. You have to laugh.

—Arlene Croce



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PHOTOGRAPHY

Belief

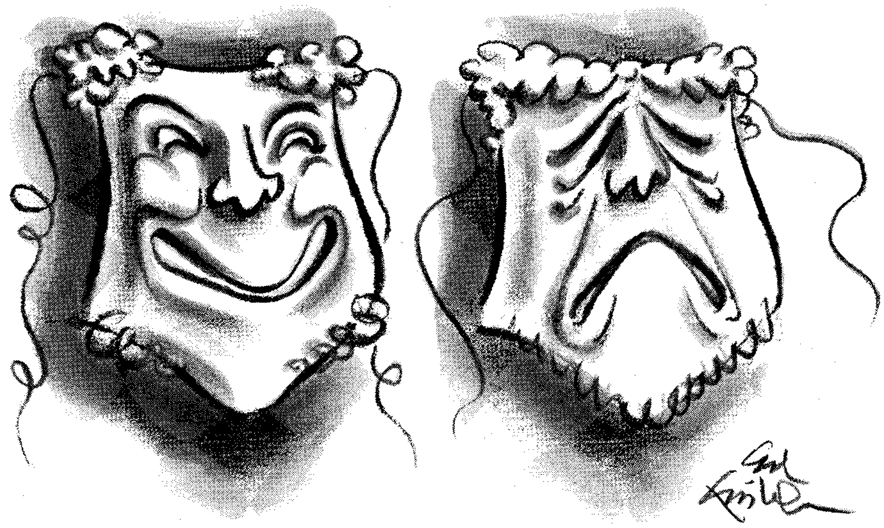
AT the Museum of Modern Art, they have the same troubles with their office machines that the rest of us do. And the same types of instructive notes about how not to have a breakdown when they break. Item No. 4 on a sign taped up at one of the copying stations in the corridors of the curatorial offices reads, "Please try not to take it personally when the machine has its problems . . . it's just a machine. In other words, please don't bang, bruise, beat, bump, or otherwise abuse it. It won't help." I happened to be at that machine because the one that visitors to the study center of the Department of Photography usually get to use was—yes, out of order. I was reproducing some pages from a book by the photographer Chauncey Hare that appeared in 1984 and got none of the attention it deserved. The book is titled "This Was Corporate America," and its subject is the opposite of people bruising and beating up on machines out of frustration: it is about people being beaten down and psychologically bruised by the corporate machine.

Although Hare's work has been honored—with a MOMA show and Guggenheim grants—he is not famous. He doesn't have the reputation of an Avedon, a Penn, a Leibovitz, or a Weber—probably because his work is not about limelight figures. The photographs in "This Was Corporate America" are of ordinary people, people who go to work on the subway. He shows person after person in a cold, anonymous-looking, dead-feeling office—in other words, unspotlit people, who sit under fluorescent lights. So his work slips out of the media's attention—too humdrum. A sense of alienation like his is what one used to expect from an artist, but today it seems almost old-fashioned, and not at all postmodern; and in his career there was no split-second leap from art school to art gallery and wealth. There was a jump, however, to save his life. "In 1977 at the age of 43, after 21 years' employment, I left my engineering job with the Standard Oil Company of California in Richmond, California, where I still live," he writes in "This Was Corporate America." "At Standard I swallowed until I choked and the programs literally caused me to vomit."

Before Hare became a photographer, and about the time he went to work for Standard Oil, in the fifties, some revered figures in the history of photography, such as Walker Evans and Ansel Adams, were also going in and out of executive offices, photographing them for magazine articles about the growth of American industry. A lesser-known figure, Dan Weiner, was on this beat, too. The work he did then is the subject of a small show now at MOMA. And the difference between Weiner's portraits of people in the fifties and Hare's eighties pictures could break your heart.

What's missing in Hare's work is the look of belief in the faces of his subjects. In Dan Weiner's photographs you find belief to spare, and you also have a chance to consider picture-taking at its most ungimmicky. And that's odd, because the gimmick is so often Weiner's subject: the search for the gimmick, the selling of it, the buying of it—in short, "American enterprise," as it was called in the fifties. We can never know how Weiner would portray us now, with our desk computers and our faxes, because he was killed in a plane crash in 1959, at the age of thirty-nine. In his day, he was something of a success. His photography was showing up in the *Times* and in some of the biggest magazines—*Fortune* and *Collier's*—and in some smaller publications, too. But, as the years went by, his work practically disappeared from circulation. Except for an occasional show (there was one at the International Center of Photography in 1980), he has been inadequately honored, especially in books on photojournalism. ("The Eyes of Time: Photojournalism in America," by Marianne Fulton, which appeared this March, virtually ignores him.) But history is like a bed: it's made, unmade, made again, and so on. In conjunction with Weiner's exhibition at MOMA, a book by Bill Ewing is about to appear. It has the same title as the show, "America Worked: The 1950s Photographs of Dan Weiner," though it has additional photographs, critical essays, and material from the period.

The photographs at MOMA were made after the war; the bombing had stopped, but this is an exhibition of battle pictures. Now the target is the public, and the weapon is the psychological warfare employed by advertising. Weiner's photographs look more like images from TV and the movies than like photographs of real people doing real things. The subjects exude such naïveté that they seem more believable if you think of them as characters in ads or as actors playing fifties parts. There's a home-products vice-president demonstrating how to sell clothes-brushes. (He suggests listening to "the music of the bristles," according to a quotation on the wall at the exhibition.) The president and top executives of Campbell's taste soup and



"Hey, man—lighten up."

make the event seem as momentous as the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls.

A good number of the males in these photographs resemble Feds as they have been imagined by Hollywood—in boxy suits and fedoras. When they're together at a strategy meeting, or checking inventory at a company they've just taken over, or surveying an idyllic piece of land for a possible real-estate development, they huddle like football players. The women (except for the showgirls) look neat and up-tight. The children look worried. One little boy is really suffering as his exhausted-from-shopping parents try to decide on a dinette set in a Brooklyn store. (I hope they got it; they could resell it for a fortune today.)

Weiner's most brilliant portraits are the equivalent of pictures you'd see now in a company's annual report, except that the people are less obviously posed. Everyone's on the go. As one of the show's two curators, Susan Kismaric (the other is Bill Ewing), points out, people seemed much less self-conscious then in front of the camera, more open and more natural. Weiner's method of taking pictures encouraged this naturalness that now looks so unnatural. He'd get to an assignment a bit early and hang around until he fitted in with the new furniture or the new car or the plane, and then start working. His "decisive moment" was different from Cartier-Bresson's: it wasn't the instant that stands out because what's happening is so exceptional; it was the stretch of time when supposedly nothing much is going on. And that's why everything is there—all the dynamics between people which most other photographers missed, because they were holding out for the remarkable. It's clear why Garry Winogrand, who sought that same artlessness in his snapshots, admired Weiner's work.

A large proportion of the photographs in the MOMA exhibition come from Weiner's assignments for *Fortune*, and it's different seeing the images where they originally apeared. The pages of *Fortune* used to be as scrumptious as paintings; the illustrations, the photography, and the ads often came from the best artists around. Even the printing was opulent. (The writing was a complex mixture of gung-ho-isms and criticisms, of racism, sexism, and enlightenment, of acuity and horse blinders.) *Fortune* was not only about the material world; it was monthly proof of that world's achievements. In its pages, Weiner's photographs sometimes shine, but often they're no more special than the next guy's. Surrounded by similar views of America selling itself on itself, they are really pretty generic, lacking the spin that emerges thirty years later, when they're clustered on the walls of the Modern. Weiner's is not the only work that has sharpened with the years. Walker Evans' pictures also often look run-of-the-mill when you come upon them in their original frame of reference. Photography is slippery that way. Isolated and framed, a photograph takes on a different life from the one it had on a contact sheet or in a newspaper or magazine.

Weiner had his complaints about the way publications used the photographer, as if he were "a plumber"; as he put it, "when they have a hole to fill, they rush him out." But he wasn't always dissatisfied, and he was counting on time to look after his work. He said as much in a short text entitled "The Camera to Me": "Photography combines those elements of spontaneity and immediacy that say, this is happening, this is real, and creates an image through a curious alchemy that will live and grow and become more meaningful in a historical perspective."

Actually, it was a lucky thing for Weiner that his *Fortune* photographs didn't stand out. On their own, they make you wonder how he could have got away with some of his asperities. *Fortune* may have had its irreverent and critical side, but it was neither *Mad* magazine nor "Das Kapital." At the MOMA exhibition, you hear people laughing out loud at some of Weiner's images, and you see them staring in amazement at others. On the museum's white walls the pictures reveal that almost everyone in them is under a spell—the spell known as the American Dream. One dream is to be the boss, and it is illustrated by a secretary-with-boss shot that is almost a cartoon of bossiness. The boss has the girth of affluence and holds in his hand a piece of paper that seems to be mobilizing both of them for action. The quotation from *Fortune* above the picture says, "Advice to Organization Wives: Be a phone pal of your husband's secretary." The same man, the industrialist Henry Kaiser, appears in Ewing's book, along

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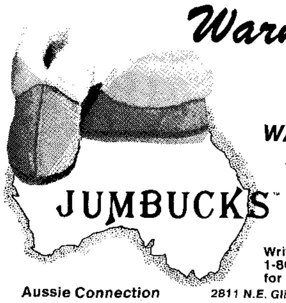

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with four executives, in what may be the first group to "reach out and touch someone": each man is holding a phone to his ear. Why, you wonder, do they all have to be in the same room? There are other novel situations. A rather handsome man holds a meeting in his Bel Air home, in a room that seems to be a combination of tree house, boardroom, and appliance store. The men sit around a table that is cluttered with papers and has a tree growing out of its middle; a television set seems to be growing out of another tree. (This same man had a bomb shelter that you arrived at via the swimming pool; the dip was meant to wash off the radiation.) But Weiner didn't photograph just the serious stuff; he was there for the fun times, too—the planned office parties. Except for the presence of typewriters, these affairs look like funeral gatherings.

Others of the photographs are an invitation to reminisce. John Wendelken, who works at the museum as a guard, remarked to me, "These pictures take me back to the days when they used to build quality refrigerators. Not anymore. Now they fall apart." The picture that inspired that good-old-days remark is of men and women in a store, admiring the latest convenience: a fridge that contains a freezer. The year is 1954, the store is Macy's, and the photograph was made for *Fortune*. Wendelken's lament about fridges comes from the same place as my nostalgia for top-quality printing. We all fall into one nostalgic trap or another. The Weiner exhibition is so effective because it forces us to catch ourselves in the act.

There are no good old days. Weiner's pictures brilliantly debunk the myth that "things were better then," through what they reveal about people who are supposed to be in Paradise—or, at least, on their way. There are a few photographs that outdo Diane Arbus on this score. One was taken in an environment that she, too, frequented—Scarsdale. It's a tableau of Dad, Mom, and the kids in front of their home, looking as though they were waiting for the executioner. In another picture, there's a family in their living room, but no one's lounging; they're having "a conversation." In order to have it, they have to raise their hands, as we see in the picture, before being given permission to speak by Dad. It's scarier than if the family

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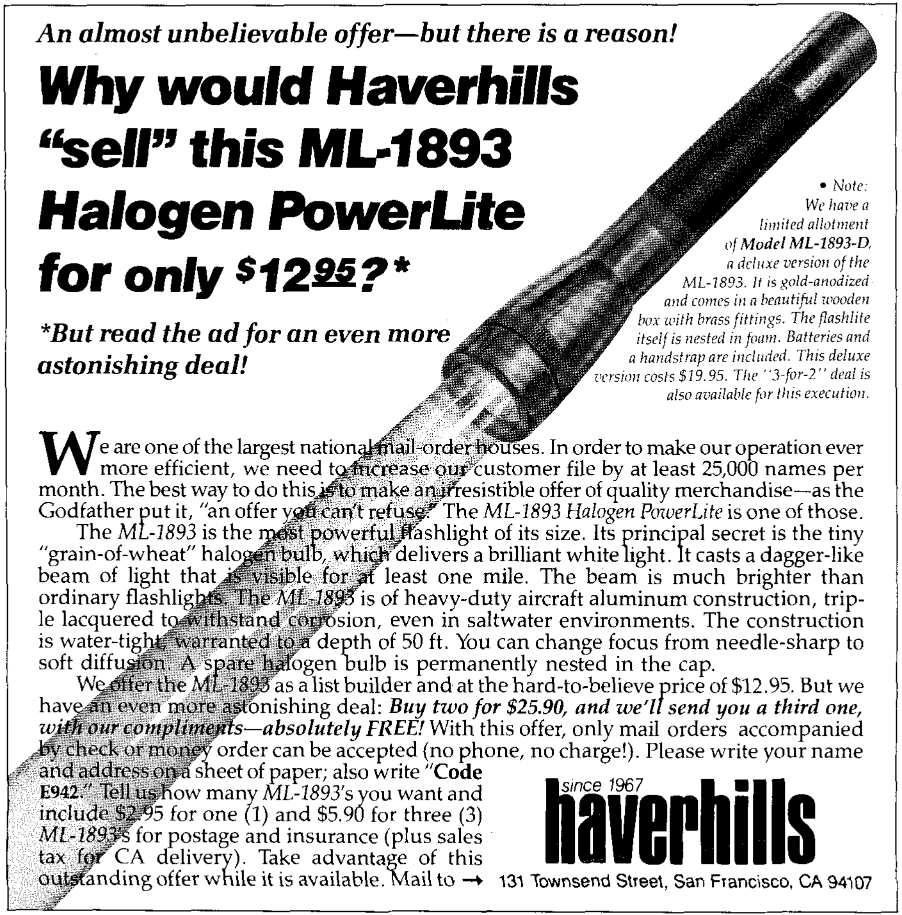

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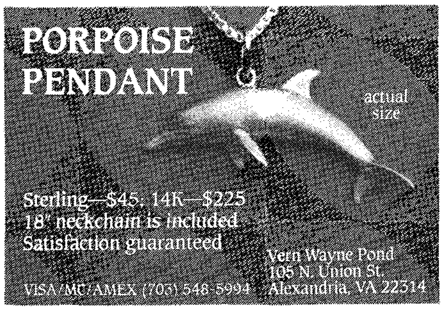

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were in their bomb shelter on a drill. Then, there's a young man waiting for an interview in front of a sign that shouts "Are *You* Ready for Your Interview?" and lists how he should look, what he should know, and how he should behave. His tie wasn't the only thing that had to be straight.

Above all, "America Worked" is about conformity and the making and spending of money. Weiner's photographs are puppet-show pictures, with the dollar controlling the strings. The costumes are, of course, versions of "the gray flannel suit." What else would "the organization man" wear? The man who wrote "The Organization Man," and who understood the mirages lurking in the dream better than anyone else, William H. Whyte, is the presiding spirit of "America Worked."

Some of the pictures depicting marketing strategy made me see red, such as an image of two little girls with two miniature shopping carts in a supermarket. The image is accompanied by a quote from *Fortune:* "People think that these tiny carts are very cute; the operator thinks they are very profitable. The small children go zipping up and down the aisles imitating their mothers in impulse buying, only more so." But it's too simple to see this show as an illustration of the evils of making a buck. Yes, there are photographs that bring out the snake-oil aspect of advertising, and photographs that display people at their most self-important. And there's proof of how tight the door to the new Paradise was. With all the bossiness on view, there's only one woman boss, Catherine Loretta O'Brien, the president of Stanley's Home Products, Inc. Otherwise, women play their stereotyped roles as wives, mothers, secretaries, members of kaffeeklatsches, floor-show entertainment. The young Martin Luther King, Jr., and Coretta Scott King and their baby are among the few black faces in the exhibition. They do more than stand out; they remind us of a different dream. The social realities emerge very clearly in "America Worked." But we don't need to go to the Modern to learn about them; life gives us plenty of such opportunities. What the pictures at MOMA do teach us is how a certain kind of photojournalism works. What did Weiner do? He made visible the hardest subject of all to visualize: belief. And he did it convincingly, partly because the people themselves were convinced and partly because of his narrative approach. He was a master at including the activity around the edges of his subjects. (You don't just see "Smiling Jim Moran, the Courtesy Man" smile as he sells a car to the people at home watching TV. You see what's happening "off camera"—a TV camera, the wires, the lights—so you also see the shaping of belief.) Some of the people in Weiner's portraits may have been angels and others terrible jerks—who knows? But most of them really seem to have believed that the work they were doing and the things they were buying were going to make their country great and their lives "happy." And Weiner clearly realized that this pride in work and faith in purchased goods was essential to understanding the culture of the fifties.

Weiner was a member of the socially conscious Photo League—yet another organization that Senator McCarthy misdiagnosed as subversive. And although the MOMA exhibition is almost solely about bullish America, it's important to know that he didn't take photographs only of flush times; as the book demonstrates, he photographed poor America, and old people. And he worked in Russia, Eastern Europe, and South Africa as well. While the pictures he made in other countries reveal him as a photographer determined to express the dignity of people, these are not his most charged images. American industrialization is the subject at which he excelled. The closer he got to the people who believed in its powers, the better his work became. This is the area of his photography which is a surprise. It's so filled with the suspense of people high on the new that you're left wondering where they landed. These photographs treat the workaday and domestic life of the fifties as though it were as much a subject for revelation as the court was in Velázquez's time, or the battlefield in Delacroix's. This is still true of daily life today, although today we mostly find in it not belief but pessimism. Now when we go to the copying machine we're not shocked when it's broken.

—Ingrid Sischy

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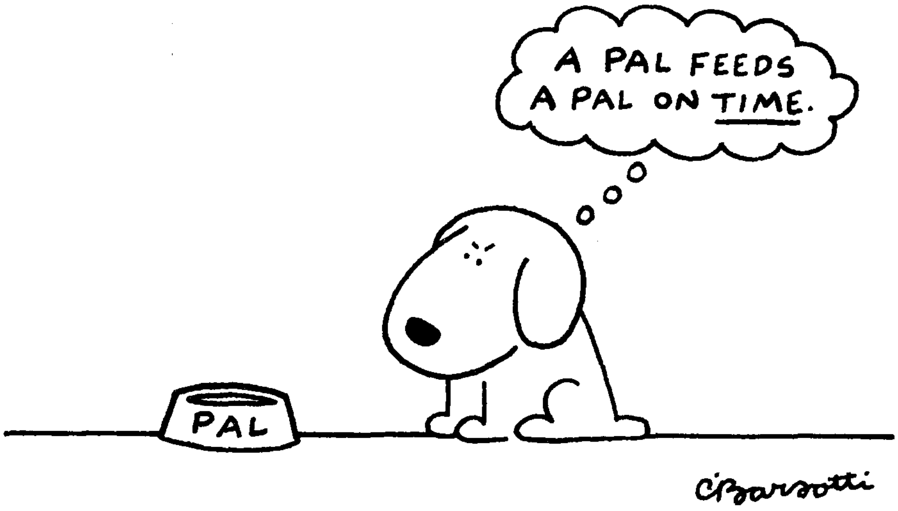
AROUND CITY HALL

BULLETINS FROM EMERALD CITY

According to the Federal Census Bureau, New York is the only major Northeastern city that has gained substantial population since the 1980 count, which the bureau put at just over seven million. Each interim estimate has added a hundred thousand or so, and the predictions are that the decennial total will be well over seven and a half million. If so—if New York is such a populous place—it is hard to explain to those who pay close attention to the front pages of local tabloids why the headlines often give the impression that there are hardly more than seven or eight people in this town at any given time. Consider the current roster of superheadliners, as it were: Donald Trump, George Steinbrenner, John Cardinal O'Connor, John Gotti, Ivan Boesky (temporarily on hiatus, serving a federal prison sentence in California, but frequently brought back here by the United States Attorney's office to provide further enlightenment about other Wall Street figures under investigation—the result being further headlines), Mike Tyson (some weeks), the Reverend Al Sharpton (most weeks), and Mayor Edward Koch (daily, if not hourly). Oddly, in a city that is seen by many outsiders as full of pushy females, superheadliners here tend not to be women. One way they do make it is to go on trial in a court of law—a territory that some of the male superheadliners are also familiar with. Bess Myerson surely qualified ("BESS HOLDS HEAD HIGH") during the last months of 1988, until her late-December acquittal on charges that, as Koch's Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, she had conspired to bribe a judge to reduce maintenance payments to her lover's estranged wife by giving the judge's daughter a job. There will doubtless be large headlines next month when Leona Helmsley, of the real-estate empire, is scheduled to go on trial on charges of tax fraud involving misappropriation of corporate funds for private use. Not yet scheduled is the date of the trial of Imelda Marcos, the wife of the former President of the Philippines, who is accused of having used Philippine government funds to buy millions of dollars' worth of New York real estate for her private enrichment. Both the Helmsley trial and the Marcos trial—in both cases, their husbands have been removed as defendants because of illness—will be held in the federal courthouse on Centre Street (two blocks north of City Hall), where the Myerson case was also heard.

Though the Helmsley and Marcos trials promise to be smashing shows, the man who has been the local Justice Department's chief showman, United States Attorney Rudolph Giuliani, won't be around to preside over them. Since he took over the office, in early 1983, he can list among his long string of convictions scores of top Mafia figures, the principals—including the Mayor's good friend Bronx Representative Mario Biaggi—in the Wedtech case (during which, with Giuliani's permission, the prosecutor referred to Attorney General Edwin Meese, their superior, as "a sleaze"), and such municipal-corruption defendants as Mayor Koch's close political ally the Bronx Democratic boss Stanley Friedman. Some figures in the legal world have complained that, in the process, Giuliani turned the United States Attorney's office into a photo-opportunity carnival rivalling that run a couple of blocks away by the Mayor. In January, Giuliani resigned. This month, he got ready, to the surprise of no one, to formally announce, in a ceremony that was to take place May 10th, that he was a candidate for the Republican nomination for mayor. If he should win the nomination and go on to take all the chips in November, as polls indicate that he will, he would displace Koch not only as mayor but as one of the city's handful of superheadliners: a loss that some New Yorkers feel might be almost as painful for the present mayor as his displacement from Gracie Mansion.

For all the sense here that this year's mayoral campaign is well under way, as of the second week in May only two major contenders, one Republican and one Democrat, had formally entered the race. The Republican, Ronald Lauder, served as Ambassador to Austria under Reagan and is the son of Estée Lauder, the head of the cosmetics company. Lauder, who is, hands down, the richest mayoral candidate in New York's history—he puts his personal fortune at two hundred and twenty-seven million dollars, and paid income taxes of nearly ten million this year—unaccountably announced his candidacy for mayor of this city during an early January visit to Albany. ("Perhaps I should announce from Vienna," Giuliani said.) Lauder made it official here on January 30th. So far, he has spent close to three million dollars on the race, two-thirds of it going for television commercials. When a reporter, apparently really hard up for a question, asked him whether he thought that having a lot of money was a drawback for a mayoral contender, the usually wooden-faced Lauder showed the first glimmer of humor ever publicly detected. "I would wish everyone such a fate," he said. Koch, who is going for a fourth term at City Hall, has said that he will enter the race in June, as he did for his reëlection campaign in 1981, or July, as he did for the one in 1985. That way, as he rockets around the five boroughs to events that others might see as strictly political, he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can continue to do so in a police helicopter or the mayoral car, without any cost to his campaign treasury. Nor will he have to waste valuable time deciding whether a speech he is to deliver should be written by someone from his city-funded or his campaign staff. Similar considerations are believed to have something to do with the delay in the formal announcements of the other two candidates who now hold public office—City Comptroller Harrison Goldin and Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins, who, if elected, would be the city's first black mayor. (On February 14th, Dinkins said that he was running but not formally announcing that he was running.) The one Democrat who has officially announced is Richard Ravitch, a wealthy builder and real-estate developer, who has served as the head of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and of the State Urban Development Corporation. Ravitch hopes to establish himself with the voting public—once it has heard of him—as an apolitical sort who can be relied on to get things done. When he entered the race, on May 3rd, he noted that his standing among Democrats in recent polls, which show him with five per cent of the vote, is about what Koch's was in May of 1977, the year that Koch went on to win the election. There could be other entries. Morton Downey, Jr., has said that his father always wanted him to be mayor of New York and that he "may very well give Mayor Koch a run for his money this time if he doesn't behave." The fact that Downey has made no move in this direction has caused some New Yorkers to complain about being deprived of a campaign that would include the present mayor and Downey and thus could have as a regular featured attraction confrontations advertised as "The Mouth v. the Mouth."

RAVITCH is not the only observer of this year's mayoral race who has been reminded of 1977. In that year, too, there was a crowded field (seven candidates just in the Democratic primary), and an incumbent mayor (Abraham Beame) who was seen as vulnerable. That year, as well, despite all the polls, few New Yorkers felt entirely comfortable about predicting the outcome. Although 1977 is hardly thought of as halcyon days, it is hard to remember that twelve years ago no one had heard of AIDS or crack, and the homeless were not a campaign issue, either. They were relatively invisible, their numbers being perhaps a quarter of today's ninety thousand or so. The word "homeless" wasn't even a category in the *Times* index then. In 1981, Koch, angry at what he saw as the hyped-up claim by some advocates for the homeless that there were thirty-six thousand homeless here ("Ridiculous!"), contracted for a study—later abandoned—that would officially count them. In the contract they were referred to as the city's "disaffiliated population." A major influence on the 1977 election was local panic as the police, in the so-called Son of Sam case, hunted down and finally captured a disturbed young Yonkers resident named David Berkowitz, who, before he was caught, killed six people more or less at random and wounded seven others. And in July of that year there was the long night of the blackout, caused by a citywide electrical failure, which set off looting sprees in many black neighborhoods. Anger over this event prompted some white New Yorkers to go around saying that something had to be done about "those people," who were "out of control." Law-and-order issues became a high priority in the mayoral campaign. Previously, it had been a secret to most of Koch's constituents in the liberal Manhattan community he represented in Congress that he favored the death penalty, but now, as a citywide candidate, he made it clear—especially outside Manhattan—that he was hellbent for it. Most of his opponents, including Mario Cuomo, were against it. (Last month, Cuomo, as he has in each of his seven years as New York's governor, vetoed the death-penalty bill passed by the State Legislature.) Cuomo has said he believes that the death-penalty issue, used against him by Koch, was what defeated him in 1977. In this election year, although there had been great uneasiness here over the issue of crime and over crime as related to race, these concerns did not have the intense dramatic focus that they did after the night of April 19th, when a young white woman investment banker, jogging in Central Park, was attacked by a band of teen-age blacks and Hispanics who, according to subsequent indictments of six of them, raped and savagely beat her and left her for dead. Donald Trump later became one of the principal orchestrators of outraged response to the tragedy, taking full-page ads in all four local daily papers headed "BRING BACK THE DEATH PENALTY. BRING BACK OUR POLICE!" Although the ad did not use racial terms to describe what Trump called the city's "crazed misfits," who had brought about "the complete breakdown of life as we know it," everybody who read it was aware that the members of the local police force are mostly white and that when he demanded that New Yorkers "unshackle them from the constant chant of 'police brutality' " the misguided chanters referred to were to be understood as often being of darker skin.

The crying of havoc was hugely popular among commentators in out-of-town papers, which tend to put special value on news suggesting that New York is really the pits. The Washington *Post* was especially attentive. One front-page story in that paper early this month appeared under the headline "ATTACK IN PARK REOPENS N.Y. RACIAL WOUNDS." It was illustrated with only two pictures, both of them of the Reverend Lawrence Lucas, the pastor of a Roman Catholic church in Harlem. Lucas spoke at length of the city's racism, noting that "we have black women raped every day in the South Bronx and Harlem" without much notice being taken. Lucas is a well-known firebrand here, whose complaints about the treatment of blacks have on occasion taken the form of complaints about the local power of Jews, particularly in the school system—a position that has caused the Mayor to accuse him of rank anti-Semitism. Not included in the Washington *Post* article was the interesting fact that Lucas is a brother of—and on good terms with—a man who could become a familiar figure in the nation's capital: William Lucas, who has been nominated by President Bush to serve as the new head of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. On the local scene, one recurrent question about the Central Park attack and the immensely strong emotions that it has set off here and elsewhere ("THIS IS THE CRIME THAT CHANGES US" was the headline over a Jimmy Breslin column in *Newsday*, and a New York *Post* cartoon showed the Statue of Liberty, looking down on Central Park, covering her face in horror and shame) has been what effect it may have on the mayoral race. This year, in contrast to 1977, Koch's being for the death penalty will not be enough. Two of his opponents, Giuliani and Lauder, also support capital punishment. And, although the effort will surely be made, it will be hard for Koch to portray as soft on law and order a prosecutor who has sent so many criminals to jail.

ACCORDING to a *Newsday* poll published on May 7th, if the Democratic primary were held that week Koch would lose to Dinkins, who would get thirty-eight per cent of the vote, to twenty-eight per cent for Koch. In a hypothetical general election in which the candidates included Dinkins, Giuliani, Koch, and Lauder, Giuliani would win thirty-seven per cent of the vote, Dinkins twenty-eight per cent, Koch twenty-one per cent, and Lauder six per cent. Particularly bad news for the Mayor was the plunge the poll showed in his popularity among Hispanic New Yorkers, with whom he has done well in the past. Eighteen months ago, they gave him a fifty-six-per-cent approval rating. In March of this year, it was forty-four per cent, and the latest figure is twenty-five per cent. Koch's over-all approval rating is twenty-eight per cent. Understandably, it is hard for the Mayor, who was reëlected overwhelmingly in both 1981 and 1985, to adjust to these alarmingly low figures.

In Koch's strange new world, it seems that nothing declines like decline. The local crime rate is way up. A record eighteen hundred and ninety-six murders were committed here last year. The Mayor is so often booed at public events that he has taken to expressing gratification when the applauders outnumber the booers. He went up to Albany to attend the Somos Uno (We Are One) Hispanic conference late last month and was booed by large numbers of the five thousand

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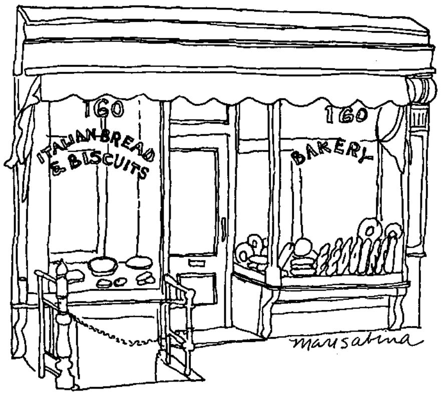
participants. When he asked for a Somos Uno sweatshirt, the conference leaders declined to give it to him, but they gave one to Cuomo. In Koch's case, it was clearly No Somos Uno.

In March, Koch decided to deal early with the homosexual issue, which is bound to come up in some voters' minds, in the case of a lifelong bachelor. That foray didn't work out well, either. To New Yorkers who ask what difference it makes now, in his twelfth year as mayor, the Koch forces say that it makes a great difference to ethnic middle-class voters in the outer boroughs, who have been the core of his political strength. Well established in local historical lore is the recollection of how, in 1977, fear of the issue caused his advisers to add to his daily entourage a phonily amorous lady friend, Bess Myerson, with whom, in the last weeks of the campaign, he moved from rally to rally seemingly "joined at the hip," as Breslin put it ("WHEN WILL ED AND BESS TIE THE KNOT?"). Later, Koch said many times that she was responsible for his victory. In March of this year, he approached the issue more directly. When a radio interviewer mentioned the rumors, Koch said, "It happens that I'm heterosexual." The front page of *Newsday* the next morning showed the Mayor, looking glum, under the headline "KOCH: 'I'M HETEROSEXUAL.' " At a political dinner that evening, one guest commented, "Ed Koch will say *any*thing to get reëlected." A few weeks later, three thousand demonstrators, organized by gay and lesbian groups, marched *on* City Hall to protest what they believe to be Koch's inadequate support for AIDS research and assistance to AIDS patients. Many of them carried poster-size blowups of the *Newsday* front page, to which were appended such disrespectful messages as "AND *I'M* CARMEN MIRANDA," "AND *I'M* CARY GRANT," and "WHAT ELSE ARE YOU LYING ABOUT, KILLER?"

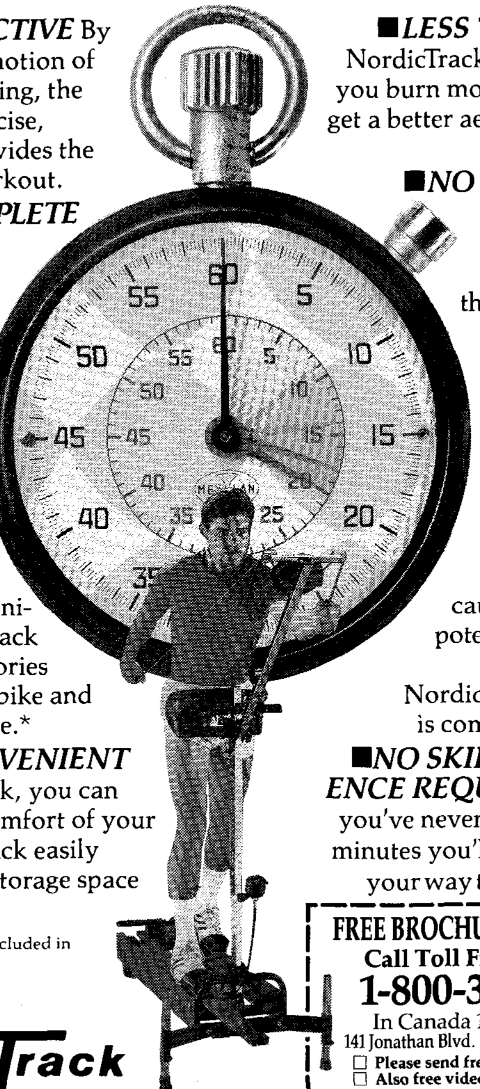
Fortunately, an event scheduled for April 30th lifted the Mayor's spirits, for a time. Everybody knows that New Yorkers throw great historical parties: ask those who attended the 1983 centennial of the Brooklyn Bridge or, seven years earlier, the bicentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Few politicians enjoy celebrations and parades as much as New York's present mayor. At the end of his first term, in December, 1981, when a reporter asked him what had been most memorable in those four years he said, without hesitation, "The hostage parade"—that is, the parade up Broadway he had held that January for the American hostages just released from their long ordeal in Iran. The Mayor's precise answer to the reporter's question was "The hostage parade—and me in the lead car." History-minded New Yorkers are proud of the fact—not widely known in many other parts of the country—that this city was the nation's first capital, from 1785 to 1790. Two years ago, at the request of members of the city delegation, Congress gave its official approval for a bicentennial celebration here of the swearing in of George Washington as the new nation's first President. The Mayor asked Joseph Flom, a prominent local lawyer, to head the New York City Commission on the Bicentennial of the Constitution. The commission raised two million seven hundred thousand dollars for the two-hundredth-anniversary party and for the refurbishing of Federal Hall—which stands on the site of the original Federal Hall, where the swearing in took place, on April 30, 1789—as the Museum of American Constitutional Government. The bicentennial events included concerts, historical seminars, a reënactment of Washington's trip north from Mount Vernon, a flotilla of ships on the Hudson, and a huge fireworks display, all leading up to the recreation, by a group of actors in knee breeches, of the Inauguration, on April 30th. All living Presidents, present and former, had been invited. Only one came, but it was George Bush—along with Barbara Bush—and that made the party.

Before the Bushes arrived at Federal Hall, they attended an Episcopal service in St. Paul's Chapel on Broadway, two blocks south of City Hall—the church where George Washington worshipped on the morning of his Inauguration. New York then had a population of twenty-eight thousand, and St. Paul's, with its three-story steeple, now nestled among skyscrapers, was a towering structure. Last month, the diocesan officials overseeing the St. Paul's gathering had received from the President's Secret Service detail stern instructions that did not seem entirely appropriate for a commemoration of the formal beginning of a new and free democratic government; possibly the Secret Service men remembered that the Bill of Rights, with its guarantees of freedom of expression, was not passed until 1791. The churchmen were instructed that in the course of the service they were not to address the President in any way, even to greet him or express gratification at his presence, and were not to mention his name, as in "Please all remain in your seats until the President has departed." However, Bishop Paul Moore, the head of the Episcopal Diocese, perhaps in the true revolutionary spirit of the day, did not comply with the rules. He boldly welcomed the Bushes, saying that he remembered their kindness "many years ago when we were working in a civil-rights project in Texas." The Bishop said of the President that he welcomed him as an Episcopalian and as a fellow Yale man, "but mostly we welcome him here because we need his support so badly in the problems of our city." Listening in the audience, the Mayor was doubtless grateful that the Bishop did *not* push his luck with the Secret Service even further and take time to inform the President of his view that, as he had said in his Christmas sermon last year, New York, "the richest city of the world," has become "the Calcutta of the West." On that occasion, he described the beggars and homeless thronging the local streets, a condition for which he held that the Koch administration bore a heavy responsibility.



During the ceremony in front of Federal Hall, after the actors playing Washington and his Cabinet had departed in a horse-drawn coach, speeches by various dignitaries went on for nearly an hour. President Bush, speaking from behind many thicknesses of glass, mentioned "the pulse of history" that all those present must feel. Only New York's Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan hit a light note. He spoke of "the single error" of the nation's first years, when Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton made a political deal that resulted in the capital's being "removed from New York to a swamp on the banks of the Potomac, thus separating it from the uplifting influences of the natural seat of culture and art, enterprise and finance. Yet," he said, "on reflection, even that decision has not proved calamitous. Malaria had a calming influence on the city of Washington." A parade up Broadway then began, and continued for several hours. Unfortunately, the President headed for home as soon as the ceremony was over, so this time there was no "lead car" for Koch to ride in.

THE Mayor's early reaction to the Central Park rampage was to remind reporters that New York was "this glorious city, this miracle on the Hudson," and to describe the attackers as "monsters" and "a wolf pack." He condemned the boys' parents for not teaching moral values in the home and not controlling their children. He mentioned as relevant his support for the death penalty. (And, indeed, there are predictions that because of the rape the State Legislature may this year succeed in overriding Cuomo's veto.) Among the out-of-towners who expressed their outrage over the attack was Richard Cohen, a Washington *Post* columnist. He called for a civil war against the violent urban world of the young attackers, who he assumed were products of welfare dependency, broken families, little or no schooling, and the drug culture. Several columnists demanded to know why black leaders hadn't denounced the rape more strongly—not satisfied with comments such as that of Manhattan's Representative Charles Rangel, who said of it, "Every human being has to feel the pain." The black leaders whose louder expressions of outrage were demanded did not presumably include the Reverend Al Sharpton, who nevertheless weighed in, saying that since the victim was being attended by white doctors there was no proof that a rape had occurred. It developed that the attackers were not members of the underclass, as it is usually defined. They lived, often with both parents, in relatively comfortable apartments, four of them in East Harlem's Schomburg



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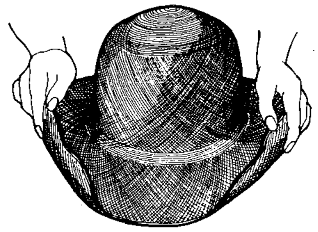

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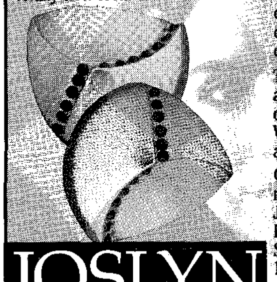

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Plaza, where the rents are as high as nine hundred dollars a month, and which has a doorman. Not one was a school dropout. Not one family, apparently, was on welfare, and, according to the police, there were no drugs involved. As a result—although many New Yorkers agreed with the Mayor, who said he didn't care what had motivated them, he just wanted them punished—besides terrible anger here, there was also great puzzlement.

From the first hours after the attack, Koch found his response to be a sharp contrast to that of his good friend Cardinal O'Connor. Immediately after the rape, O'Connor referred with sympathy to the families of the accused criminals, who, he said, "must have been doing the best they can." He spoke of his opposition to the death penalty, which he did not believe was a deterrent. He visited the victim and her family, who had hurried here from their home, in Pittsburgh, and who are devout Catholics. He also went to see the arrested teen-agers in their places of detention, as well as to visit their families, saying that he was available to all of them as he was to "anybody else in trouble in New York." Along with anger and puzzlement, a widespread emotion here was sadness. A strong influence on the lowering of the Trump-style decibels—which seemed to be intended to deepen local racial wounds—was the attitude of members of the victim's family. Through the Cardinal and others, they spoke of forgiveness and expressed over and over their gratitude to New Yorkers for their kindness. New Yorkers, some of them from the East Harlem neighborhood where the arrested boys lived, laid flowers and gifts and messages ("To Our Runner") at the site of the attack. Prayer services for the jogger's recovery were held in the Park, at churches around the city, and at Schomburg Plaza.

About a week after the rampage, the Mayor suddenly announced that he would hold a prayer vigil outside the hospital where the jogger was being treated. Koch has not been known as the city's great communicator for nothing. In 1986, when he attended the funeral of Queens Borough President Donald Manes, who had committed suicide in the midst of the breaking municipal-corruption scandals, he brought along his own mike stand, to be at the ready for interviews after the service. On the day of the prayer vigil, although it was, of course, an entirely nonpolitical occasion, he had his two-hundred-pound City Hall podium trucked uptown for the event, so that the voices of those who spoke—including his own voice—would carry to the crowd and to the television viewers.

GIULIANI'S formal entry into the mayoral race, scheduled for ten o'clock on the morning of May 10th, was cancelled, and rescheduled for a later date. Seven hours earlier, Richard Green, who, as the chancellor of New York's schools, was responsible for a public-school system attended by nearly a million children (most of them black and Hispanic), had suddenly died, at the age of fifty-two. The city's first black chancellor, named after a long and stormy search, Green had held the job only fourteen months, having come here from Minneapolis, where he had served as superintendent of schools and where he had lived nearly all his life. To a man used to a smaller-scale and more orderly world, his months here must have seemed a nightmare. School-test scores had fallen, dropout rates had risen, a kindergartner had been suspended for bringing a loaded gun to school. Over half the local school boards were under investigation for corruption. Teachers and principals had been indicted for buying drugs. A *Newsday* cartoon a few months ago showed Green as Dorothy in Oz over the caption "I don't think we're in Minnesota anymore, Toto." In Brooklyn, the afternoon before the Chancellor died, a school administrator and a high-school teacher were charged as sellers of cocaine. A few hours after he went to bed, Green woke up with a severe asthma attack. Before the ambulance arrived, he told his wife, "I don't think I'm going to make it." Deputy Chancellor Edward Mecklowitz, a veteran of the school system, was named acting chancellor. The *Times* headline on May 11th described the system as being "in disarray," and predicted that the search for Green's successor would be divisive. Certainly, it would be an issue in the mayoral race. Green's sudden death would be taken by some observers here and elsewhere as further proof that assignment to this city can be hazardous duty. And it was also a reminder, in a political year, of how things may turn upside down overnight.

—ANDY LOGAN

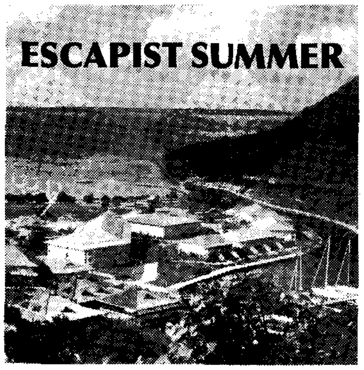
MUSICAL EVENTS

The Berkowitz Ring

STAGING Wagner's four-day "Ring des Nibelungen" is—at any rate, until Stockhausen completes his seven-day "Licht"—the largest task that an opera company can undertake. And one of the most important. Since the "Ring" first appeared, at Bayreuth in 1876, it has cast a spell over the Western world. It flooded through music and literature, stirred men's thinking. Today still, when a new "Ring" is staged at Bayreuth statesmen, poets, philosophers, scientists, captains of industry are seen among the audience on the Green Hill. The "Ring"—and whatever glosses the director of the year may have added to it—reënters and colors their and our view of the world. It is at once a huge drama, a musical feast, a "world history," and an extraordinary study of good and evil, love and loathing, nobility and baseness, lust for power and wealth and readiness to resign them, selfishness and sacrifice in conflict both among nations and classes and within a single human psyche.

Many large companies present the "Ring" pretty well annually. The Met did so from 1889 to 1951. A new production, derived from Herbert von Karajan's in Salzburg, was begun in 1967, brought to completion in 1975, and never revived. The latest Met "Ring," which appeared last month, is the first cycle since then, and the first since 1939 to be played within the span of a week. It was embarked on in 1986, with "Die Walküre." "Das Rheingold" appeared in 1987, "Siegfried" in 1988, "Götterdämmerung" earlier this season. We were polite and patient about the installments. They had little life in them, but the ingredients seemed promising. The creators of the production—the conductor James Levine, the director Otto Schenk, and the designer Günther Schneider-Siemssen—evidently had an idea: to stage a Met "Ring" in the manner of Winifred Wagner's nineteen-thirties Bayreuth "Ring"s (which were designed by Emil Preetorius and staged by Heinz Tietjen). It would be neutral, uninterpretative, impartial, uneccentric: at once a corrective to the controversial, politicized "Ring" productions of recent years and a large, handsome frame into which cast after cast could step without much rehearsal. The approach might have led somewhere if singers had been found who commanded or could be taught the grand old Wagnerian manner. Frida Leider, Lauritz Melchior, and Friedrich Schorr would have felt at home in these sets and known how to behave in them. But Mr. Schenk seemed content to let his modern actors do each his or her own thing, worked out in strongly directed "Ring"s elsewhere (some Peter Hall business here, some Patrice Chéreau business there, touches by Nikolaus Lehnhoff, by Harry Kupfer) or not worked out at all. The modern mannerisms (especially that of singing long stretches of music—narratives, love duets, speeches—while kneeling) looked particularly inappropriate in the old-fashioned sets. But, as I said, we were patient: when the four parts were pulled together—when Mr. Schenk stepped back and considered the whole and how it might flow—then surely something would emerge, something would begin to happen. Nothing did happen. Mr. Schenk, after blocking "Götterdämmerung" last year and retouching "Rheingold," left New York and relinquished the assembly and staging of the "Ring" to a staff director, Phebe Berkowitz. It may be that Miss Berkowitz has great ideas of her own about the work, but she was stuck with Mr. Schenk's "book," his many meaningless, unmotivated moves, and it did not seem that she had been given the long weeks of rehearsal needed to forge three different (though partly overlapping) casts into three consistent, inspired presentations of the cycle.

The first of the three was done as four Saturday matinées. I saw the second cycle, which was spread across six days. There was a fair amount to enjoy. Hildegard Behrens, the Brünnhilde, although vocally underequipped for the role, portrayed it intently and affectingly. There was passionate intelligence in all she did. It was a modern, not a traditional, interpretation; this Valkyrie gave Siegmund an encouraging little cuddle at the close of the *Todesverkündigung* scene. Franz Mazura was a powerful and subtle Alberich. Graham Clark was an incisive Mime. James Morris, the Wotan, has a magnificent voice. His attack is slow, and so he often seemed to be behind the beat, and he was often too loud, tromboning confidences or conversational exchanges out into the house. But it was noble, beautiful sound. The Erda, Birgitta Svendén, was as unsteady as all others—except Helga Dernesch—that I have heard in the last two decades or so. Do firm, solid contraltos still exist? Miss Dernesch, who has now sung at least nine "Ring" roles (Brünnhilde, Gutrune, Fricka, Erda, Second Norn, Third Norn, Ortlinde,



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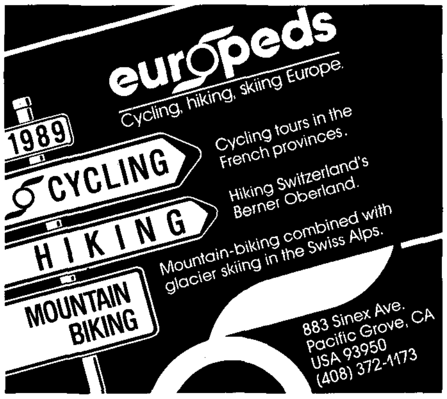

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Waltraute, and Wellgunde), was the Fricka and the Waltraute of the second cycle. The Siegfried, Toni Krämer, was efficient, prosaic, overactive in his gesticulatory assumption of boyishness. And so on. The individual performances, whatever their merits, remained distinct. No mutual fires blazed. The whole was undramatic, untheatrical, unworthy. It was also badly lit, by Gil Wechsler. Photographs of the production reveal colors and rich detail in the costumes and the sets; in the theatre, most of the scenes seemed murkily gray and brown. It was hard to see the singers' faces.

Mr. Levine drew some high-quality playing from the orchestra, but his reading was slow, heavy, and loud. He seldom drowned the singers, it is true, but he held things to a level that inhibited any intimacy of utterance. The preludes, entr'actes, and perorations were brayed and banged out with coarse enthusiasm. The Funeral March was vulgar. By the clock, the timings were not very different from those of Hans Knappertsbusch (and therefore slower than most). It was the turgid pulse, the lack of response to the stage, the emphasis on fatness and volume that made stretches of the score seem interminable. This was a shallow, unpoetic, mindless account of the great drama. We go on hoping: there are more cycles next season.

A Riverside Symphony concert in Alice Tully Hall this month, conducted by George Rothman, began with Ives' "Central Park in the Dark"—composed in days when it was safe to sit out in the Park on a hot summer night and listen to the city's sounds stealing through the darkness. The program was thematic, an exploration of "impure"—or program—music. Maurice Wright's "Night Scenes," commissioned by the orchestra, had its first performance. The piece, the composer writes, "depicts one's reactions to things nocturnal: night lightning, torrential rain, foggy streets and neon lights, a country road under bright stars, white columns in the moonlight." Also sleep, dreams, and a morning lament for the death of night. The rushing figures at the start suggested to me speeded-up film of headlight beams cutting and crisscrossing in wild patterns through the dark. There was some interesting use of "live" synthesizer tone in dialogue with instruments. But after a while the work lost me. I am more impressed by Wright's Piano Sonata (1982), which has appeared on New World Records, played by the powerful, poetic young Canadian pianist Marc-André Hamelin. This is strongly made, shapely, "classical" in the way that Hindemith's music sometimes is: brave, crunchy, and arresting, holding the listener attent to the combination of known procedures with new sounds and harmonies. The coupling is Ives' "Concord" Sonata.

The Riverside program was completed by Honegger's Fourth Symphony ("Deliciae Basilienses," "Delights of Basle") and Poulenc's "The Story of Babar, the Little Elephant." Charles Dutoit's recordings of the Honegger symphonies, on Erato, have made a good case for one of those composers who are admired when they are heard but are not exactly missed when they are not. (Is Milhaud another? What company is preparing a production of his "Christophe Colomb" for 1992?) Mr. Rothman, too, was a cogent Honegger advocate. "Babar" was narrated by Irene Worth (amplified) with charm and skill, and the instrumental sounds were captivating. They were devised by Jean Françaix, who orchestrated Poulenc's speaker-and-piano melodrama with a hand recalling now Stravinsky's, now Ravel's.

Wright's "Night Scenes" is due to appear on a New World record with Anthony Korf's Second Symphony, "Blue Note," which the Riverside Symphony played at an earlier Tully concert this season, also conducted by Mr. Rothman. This work contains beautiful, imaginative sounds, and striking ideas. It gives the impression of a composer finding his own ways, pursuing a personal vision, following his own ear. Do I make him seem another Berlioz? The music is not as bold, original, and soaring as that. There are awkwardnesses in transitions, and some moments of rhythmic squareness. But the symphony repays hearing. The New York Philharmonic might play it. And it might flourish under slightly freer, less scrupulous handling than that of Mr. Rothman, to whom it is dedicated.

THE Brooklyn Philharmonic's Frederick P. Rose Prize Competition, for "a new orchestral work (of fifteen to twenty minutes in duration) that will appeal to large classical-music audiences," was won by Jay Anthony Gach's "Chant." At a BAM performance last week—the third of three, conducted by Lukas Foss—"Chant" lasted twenty-four minutes. It didn't strike me as much of a piece: a four-movement work in which chants Byzantine, Tibetan (the lively Monkey's Dance of the Ramayana), Gregorian (or "gregorian-like," according to the composer's program note), and Islamic ("Adaan: Call to Prayer") were orchestrated, harmonized, counterpointed, handled in various ways. The program book, not tactfully, cited a remark by Saint-Saëns: "He who does not prefer . . . a Gregorian chant without any accompaniment to a series of dissonant and pretentious chords does not love music." Saint-Saëns's G-Minor Piano Concerto followed, with Shura Cherkassky the soloist. This was bewitching. Mr. Cherkassky, Russian-born, is a Curtis product, and a national treasure. He played to President Harding in the White House. There was a time, a few decades ago, when he could be rather clattery; I remember hating the way he once banged out "Carnaval," in the Wigmore Hall. No longer. The Saint-Saëns concerto was notable for light, elegant sparkle and, even more, for passages of whispered delicacy and for buoyant chamber-musical intimacies between the piano and the Brooklyn Philharmonic winds. Mr. Cherkassky must have played the concerto a few hundred times; he played it again with a freshness and zest to make it seem that he had just discovered and was eager to share, with the orchestra and with all who were listening, the felicities of this work that—with the composer as soloist—was first conducted by Anton Rubinstein, who taught Josef Hofmann, who, at Curtis, taught Cherkassky.

Interplay of this kind was absent from the Mozart piano concertos that Alfred Brendel played with Orpheus in Carnegie Hall earlier this year. (There were two concerts; I heard the second, with K. 503 and K. 414.) Surprisingly so, because Orpheus is a conductorless orchestra, and when a pianist sits down with a band of players around him, to play a concerto, one expects him to take the lead, to shape, direct, and inspire the performance. That's what Edwin Fischer and Benjamin Britten did, what Leonard Bernstein, Mitsuko Uchida, Malcolm Bilson, and many others do. But Mr. Brendel sat grim and still while the concertmistress led the band, and came to life only when his entries arrived. Even then, he ventured no chamber-musical eye contact in the dialogues. These were pondered and in many ways powerful performances, but they seemed to me ungenerous, uncoöperative, cold: not so much "Brendel with friends" as "Brendel with accompaniment," setting out his latest—and trenchant—thoughts about the works in hand.

Miss Uchida gave a recital of Mozart piano music in the Metropolitan Museum auditorium: the sonatas K. 309, 310, and 533/494, and the B-minor Adagio. She was spellbinding. Purists may object to her employment of a Steinway rather than a piano of the kind that Mozart wrote for; but she used the modern instrument to project so fine an appreciation of phrasing, stresses, musical sense that all one could do was marvel at and delight in playing so intent, so sensitive to what Mozart had written.

In Carnegie, Maurizio Pollini gave two recitals. I heard the second, with dismay. It ended with a "Hammerklavier" played so fast, and with so much pedal, that what Beethoven had written could hardly be heard. Velocity, brashness, and blurs! Brahms—his Opus 119—was similarly slighted. Only Stockhausen—the fifth and ninth Piano Pieces—rang out clearly and eloquently. At the 92nd Street Y, Mieczyslaw Horszowski, who was born in 1892—nineteen years before Cherkassky, and a full half century before Pollini—played Bach, early Beethoven, and Chopin with rare beauty of tone and generosity of spirit.

—ANDREW PORTER

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DEPARTMENT OF AMPLIFICATION

MAY 10, 1989

To the Editors, *The New Yorker:*

SEVERAL readers have written to inquire what finally happened in Uruguay. As you will recall, at the point where my recent Reporter at Large articles (April 3rd and 10th) left off, the Uruguayans were on the verge of an election—a referendum to decide, once and for all, whether to overturn the amnesty for human-rights violations which the country's reconstituted democratic Congress had extended two years earlier, more or less at gunpoint, to the security agents of the previous military regime.

In the election, which was scheduled for Sunday, April 16th, it was decided that, to simplify matters, the secret ballot would be color-coded: anyone desiring to overturn the amnesty would put a green ballot in the envelope provided to all voters, and anyone desiring to reaffirm the amnesty would insert a yellow ballot. The yellow (or "gold," as its proponents preferred to characterize it) side continued to enjoy the fervent endorsement of the major media and most of the leaders of the two principal parties. Its backers argued that *only* through a *yellow vote* could the continuity of a democratic future be assured. President Julio María Sanguinetti himself said of the possibility of a green victory, "I can't promise anything; it would be like entering a dark alley." In the days just before the election, Sanguinetti's Defense Minister, General Hugo Medina, who had been the head of the military junta, warned that "the pacification, the future's calm, and the Army's dignity are at stake on April 16th." And the head of the retired Army officers' association, addressing a rally on the eve of the election, declared that the Uruguayan military would not tolerate being insulted or being separated from political power.

The green side's supporters, for their part, urged voters not to succumb to the fear campaign. They argued that the only true guarantee of democracy's future would be a sense of justice regarding the past. They had difficulty getting this message across, however. For example, though the pro-referendum movement had bought time on Uruguay's three commercial television stations for the week before the vote, none of the television stations would broadcast its commercial.

On Sunday, April 16th, it rained throughout the country all day long, sometimes quite heavily—downpours that broke a terrible summer-long drought and so were greeted with mixed feelings. Voter turnout was also heavy—over eighty per cent—despite the weather. The polls closed at 7:30 P.M., and the entire country seemed glued to TV sets, awaiting the returns. By shortly before midnight, the trend had become clear: the final tally would show that fifty-three per cent had voted yellow, as against forty per cent green, with seven per cent of the ballots either blank or spoiled. One of the co-chairpersons of the Pro-Referendum Commission, Matilde de Gutiérrez Ruiz—the widow of a popular former politician who had been kidnapped and assassinated while in exile in Buenos Aires in 1976—addressed a press conference and the television audience around one in the morning. "According to the results of the plebiscite, the amnesty law has been sustained," she declared. "Without a doubt, this decision by the electorate should be respected. The country and all its institutions *cannot* be *insensitive to the fact that* almost half the population radically disagreed with the solution represented by the amnesty law. And while it is certain that the content of that law should now be respected, it must also be accepted, as an absolute commitment of national resolve, that never, under any circumstances, can those violations that characterized the regime before March 1, 1985, be permitted to recur."

The official media and the leading politicians who had backed the amnesty law all along were exultant. Vice-President Enrique Tarigo, who had led the yellow campaign, declared that the results of the plebiscite would now permit the country to "set out on the road of the future without the legacy of the past." President Sanguinetti, at a news conference on Monday morning, adopted a fairly measured tone. "There is no sense of triumph" in the referendum result, he said, and he went on, "The most important aspect of all this is that the country was able to do it [by popular vote]. Yesterday, at 7:30 P.M., when the ballot boxes were closed, Uruguay completed its transition to democracy." As for the wider requirements of justice, President Sanguinetti declared, "In this case, peace is justice."

There was, in any event, no sense of triumph in Montevideo itself. In fact, in the capital, where roughly half the population of Uruguay lives, the amnesty had been decisively rejected, fifty-four per cent green to forty-two per cent yellow. When I reached Eduardo Galeano, the noted Uruguayan author, by phone, he told me, "Here in town, the yellow vote was shameful, hidden. In the days before the election, you saw people everywhere wearing green—even though it took some courage to wear it, since the military were so obviously angry with those who opposed the amnesty law. Hardly anyone was wearing yellow. Even those who were going to vote yellow went out of their way not to wear yellow. The night of the election and the next morning were, of course, very depressing for us, but in the days since I've begun to recover. One of the most striking things about the vote was the way it divided along age-group lines. Older Uruguayans voted yellow, out of a sense of anxious caution, I suppose, but younger Uruguayans—who had been subject to the military regime's harsh indoctrination during their school days—overwhelmingly voted green. So, you see, it's O.K.: this old, gray country contains in its belly a green new country."

Other proponents of the referendum also found positive elements in the outcome. One of them said to me, "Two years ago, with the initial amnesty, the authorities desperately tried to make it seem as if nothing had happened—torture and so forth were merely marginal occurrences; one no longer needed to think about them. But all the work of the past two years forced people to think—everybody. The campaign allowed the inscription of that history in the collective memory."

Sincerely,
LAWRENCE WESCHLER

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Last year's show sold more than 1,000 tickets, which is close to a sellout, according to Heartland member Bobby Wooldridge. All the groups fall under the umbrella of the Tuscaloosa Chapter of SPEBSQSA (Society for the Prevention of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America).
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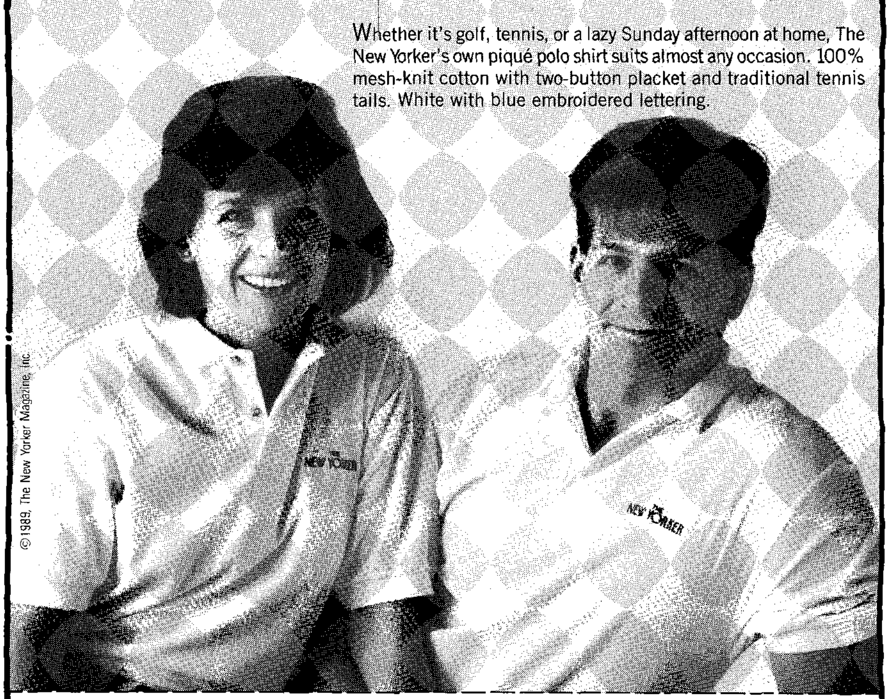

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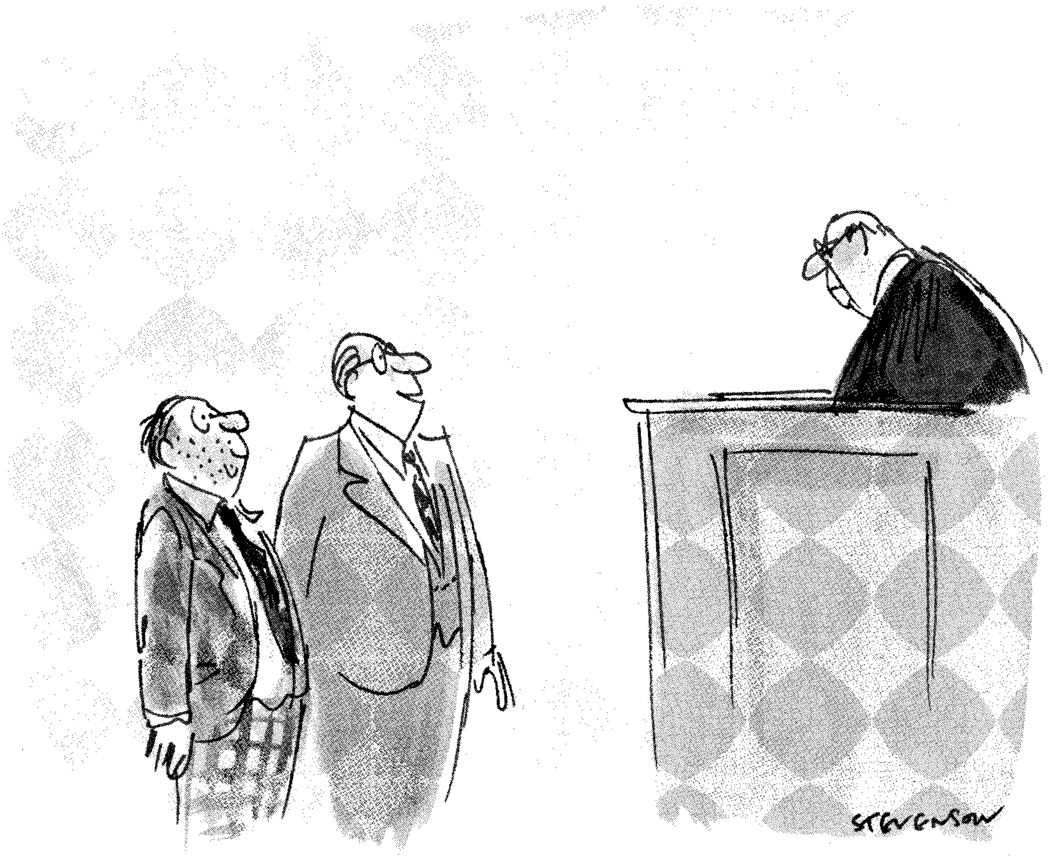
BOOKS

Satisfaction

IN 1916, when James Joyce was two years into the killing labor of writing "Ulysses," P. G. Wodehouse was cranking out stories called "The Artistic Career of Corky," "The Aunt and the Sluggard," "Jeeves Takes Charge," and "Jeeves and the Unbidden Guest"—the first installments of a comic epic perhaps a shade less monumental than Joyce's but about as brilliant and, mysteriously, as enduring. Joyce's feat of turning the lives of ordinary Dubliners into the stuff of modern (that is, ironic) myth is one of the great achievements of twentieth-century literature, and, like all works of genius, it moves and stimulates us in ways that are tough to explain. The appeal of Wodehouse's stories about the dim English gentleman named Bertie Wooster and the brainy valet known as Jeeves isn't just elusive; it's virtually unfathomable. On the face of it, there's no reason these disposable entertainments about fantastic characters in a world that, even if it ever existed, was hardly the everyday landscape of its readers should seem so wonderful to us now. That's why popular culture, like theology, gives us a headache when we try to think about it for very long: it seems all miracles. Why Holmes and Watson? Batman and Robin? Fantômas? Bugs Bunny? Dracula? Ralph Kramden and Ed Norton? At a certain magnitude, pop archetypes make less sense than even the most intractable high art; it's as if they owed their status to a kind of supernatural visitation, like Bernadette's close encounter at Lourdes. (Why her?) Faced with the task of accounting for such phenomena, one feels—as Bertie often does at the prospect of a weekend in the country with some particularly scaly friends of his Aunt Agatha—a nameless dread.

"The World of Jeeves" (Harper & Row; $22.95) contains all the thirty-four short stories Wodehouse wrote about these two characters, and it's well titled: the tales take place in a variety of settings, but Bertie and Jeeves have their own coördinates, unique and constant. Bertie, who narrates all but one of the stories (and all but one of the eleven Jeeves novels as well), is an idle, amiable, and completely harmless fool—as benign a specimen of the upper-class twit as can be imagined. He's profoundly useless and, fortunately, knows it; he's utterly unself-conscious about his vapidity. Bertie is fond of his drink, enjoys a bit of mischief with his pals at the Drones Club (fellows with names like Gussie, Bingo, Sippy, and Biffy), flees romantic entanglements and the company of children, and isn't ashamed to admit that he favors the simpler pleasures: "I yield to no man in my approval of those institutions where on payment of a shilling you are permitted to slide down a slippery run-way sitting on a mat. I love the Jiggle-Joggle, and I am prepared to take on all and sundry at Skee Ball for money, stamps, or Brazil nuts." Chucklehead that he is, Bertie makes a fairly sensational job of getting some fun out of life, in part because he aspires to nothing else. He's the embodiment of a very English version of the pleasure principle, which is that life provides joy and comfort to the extent that one is incapable of imagining it otherwise: "What with enjoying a sizable private income and a topping digestion, I'm bound to say it isn't very often I find my own existence getting a flat tyre." And when imagination is called for—in one of those situations "so absolutely foul that the old nerves began to stick out of my body a foot long and curling at the ends"—Bertie Wooster calls for Jeeves.

Or, more frequently, the amazing valet simply appears, unbidden, at precisely the opportune moment. Describing Jeeves' entrances and exits, his awestruck employer adopts a lyrical tone:



"How about a quick acquittal, Your Honor, so this doesn't turn into a cause célèbre?"

> Jeeves flowed in with the tray, like some silent stream meandering over its mossy bed.
>
> He trickled into my room.
>
> He had shimmered in.
>
> He floated noiselessly through the doorway like a healing zephyr. . . . This fellow didn't seem to have any feet at all. He just streamed in. . . . Then he seemed to flicker, and wasn't there any longer.

In "The Artistic Career of Corky," the first true Jeeves story, Bertie provides his most penetrating analysis of this effect:

> "Sir?" said Jeeves, kind of manifesting himself. One of the rummy things about Jeeves is that, unless you watch like a hawk, you very seldom see him come into a room. He's like one of those weird birds in India who dissolve themselves into thin air and nip through space in a sort of disembodied way and assemble the parts again just where they want them.

To Bertie, Jeeves is as incomprehensible as he is indispensable: he's not of this world, but the Wooster world would be unimaginable without him. "I eyed him with reverence," Bertie says at one point, and he ought to. One of the central jokes of the series is that this chipper, trouble-prone dimwit has lucked into a servant of uncanny—supernatural—perfection. And Jeeves isn't merely impeccable; he's also an ideal embodiment of the British upper-class values that his master conspicuously lacks—taste, decorum, restraint, practical intelligence, and so on. Thanks to Jeeves, Bertie is free to make an absolute ass of himself at all times. (Is it any wonder these characters have such a hold on our imaginations?) Whatever goes wrong (and everything always goes wrong in these stories), Jeeves—who seems to treat Bertie's dilemmas as formal problems, opportunities to test the powers of his elegant and devious wits—can make it right again.

The really rummy thing about Jeeves is that he appears to have entered Wodehouse's fiction noiselessly, as a plot device, and then somehow reassembled himself as an archetype. He just streams into our consciousness, and before we know it he's dominating it completely. Wodehouse writes in his introduction to "The World of Jeeves," "I find it curious, now that I have written so much about him, to recall how softly and undramatically Jeeves first entered my little world. Characteristically, he did not thrust himself forward." The author is refer-

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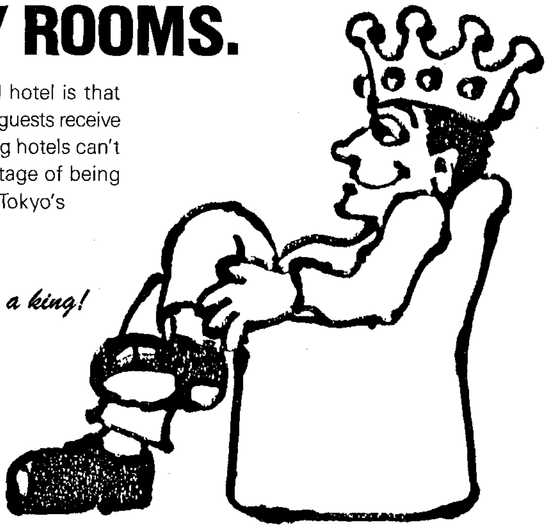
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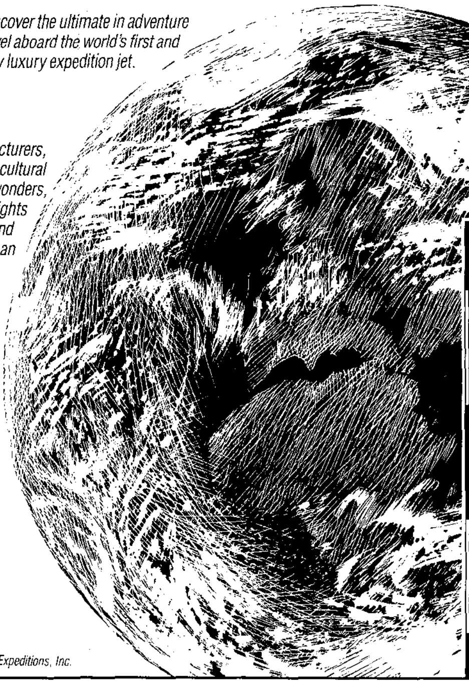

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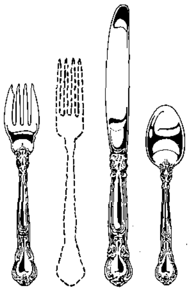

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ring to the valet's very first appearance, in a 1915 story called "Extricating Young Gussie," which gives Jeeves exactly two lines. He quickly became an important character—which in the terms of Wodehouse's art means simply that he was a very, very useful one. Jeeves' superhuman cleverness ("He appeared looking brainier than one could have believed possible—sheer intellect shining from every feature") is as liberating for Wodehouse as it is for Bertie, enabling him to construct farces of the most staggering complexity, of the wildest improbability, because nothing he invents could be too outré for Jeeves to resolve. (In the non-Jeeves stories, chance plays a much larger part in restoring order at the end.) Farce is a demanding art; if it isn't worked out perfectly, it just seems stupid. Jeeves *serves:* his first function, and his last, is to make his creator's little world—cozy but subject to elaborate mishaps—run like clockwork.

The only way to talk sensibly about the Jeeves stories is to treat them as splendid mechanical toys. One of Wodehouse's most winning qualities is his absolute refusal to be serious. He shuns significance with the sort of horror that Bertie feels in the presence of the "large, brainy, strenuous, dynamic" Honoria Glossop: "The effect she had on me whenever she appeared was to make me want to slide into a cellar and lie low till they blew the All-Clear." In the hilarious "Jeeves Takes Charge," Bertie is forced (by another strenuously intellectual sort of girl, Florence Craye) to read a bit of something called "Types of Ethical Theory," and it doesn't go down easily. His reaction to two sentences he reads at random is eloquent: "Well—I mean to say—what?" And even the sober-minded Jeeves, who is known to dip into Spinoza in his leisure time, draws the line at Florence Craye's next recommendation: "You would not enjoy Nietzsche, sir. He is fundamentally unsound." The problem with Wodehouse is that his fiction, for all its aggressive frivolity, is manifestly the work of a genius: it compels our attention and affection the way great literature is supposed to. Further, his technical rigor and the concentrated intensity of his language rival those of the obsessive birds who have made most of this century's high art. So we try to *explain* him—and get ourselves into soup so

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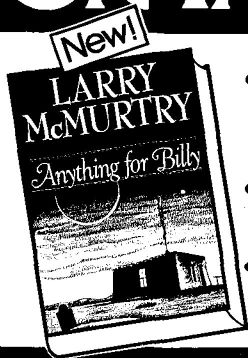

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thick that not even Jeeves could ladle us out of it.

The distinguished and intelligent Wodehouse commentator Richard Usborne, for instance, sloshes about helplessly when he attempts to analyze the literary appeal of Bertie and Jeeves. In "The Penguin Wodehouse Companion" (Penguin; $7.95) Usborne provides an excellent book-by-book evaluation of Wodehouse's ninety-five published volumes; a generous collection of quotations; some revealing biographical details; and a wonderful little essay on the impossibility of translating the writer's mad slang into French. But when he starts in on what he thinks the characters are all about he seems as crazy as Gussie Fink-Nottle or Bingo Little in love. Searching for antecedents, he spends a paragraph comparing Bertie and Jeeves with Watson and Holmes, which is fair enough: Conan Doyle's stories are, at least, popular fiction of the sort that Wodehouse aspired to write. But then disaster strikes. Usborne goes on:

> On another level you may see Bertie Wooster as a modern Don Quixote, constantly setting out on adventures to help his friends and constantly making an endearing ass of himself. Don Quixote has a wiser *vade mecum* in Sancho Panza; Bertie has the wiser Jeeves. Bertie, like Don Quixote, has his brain curdled with romance. Don Quixote's romance came from books of knight-errantry; Bertie's from Edwardian fiction and a regular diet of detective novels.

And so forth. This is fundamentally unsound: Jeeves as Sancho, the earthy man of the people? (What's next—"*Jeeves le fataliste et son maître*"?) Worse, it's unilluminating. A lot of popular art, as well as the more exalted stuff, uses pairs of temperamentally opposite characters; just about every road movie and Hollywood formula cop-buddy picture could be seen as a modern version of Cervantes's structure. It's a convention, and an effective one: it generates tension, which is to narrative what oxygen is to life on earth.

Usborne plunges further into the gumbo when he tries to make the case that "we find more of the Wodehouse personal identity hidden in Bertie than in any other of Wodehouse's puppets." He asserts that Wooster is "a poetic, middle-voice throw-back to the dewy, pie-faced schoolboy romantic that Wodehouse saw himself as having been before he struck out into the

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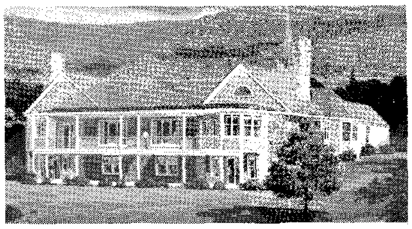

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world for himself." There's some truth in this: Wodehouse has clearly endowed Bertie with one of his own best characteristics—a love of sheer silliness—and treats him with great affection. But then a lot of his characters are pretty goofy (take, for instance, any one of the hapless fun-lovers of the Drones Club, or the game, flailing duffers who hack their way through his golf stories), and his attitude toward all of them is benevolent. In fact, Wodehouse has a dual nature: he's at least as much Jeeves as he is Bertie. What's great about these stories is the exquisite balance they strike between anarchy and order: both qualities are viewed with amused detachment, and neither would be half so funny without the other. Jeeves is—not to put too fine a point on it—the technical, craftsmanlike side of Wodehouse's genius, the problem-solver, the cool, lucid engineer of comfort and joy. In a sense, he's everything that Wodehouse, this modest literary entertainer, ever meant to be. Jeeves' characteristic response to Bertie's extravagant expression of gratitude is "I endeavour to give satisfaction, sir"—and if Wodehouse had a motto that would surely be it.

What happens to Usborne could, of course, happen to anyone who ponders the mystery of Wodehouse for too long. In difficult situations, one often has a tendency to babble, as Bertie knows all too well. Face to face with the formidable, humorless psychiatrist Sir Roderick Glossop (Honoria's father), Bertie discovers that his anxiety has got him off to a rotten start: " 'What ho! What ho! What ho!' I said, trying to strike the genial note, and then had a sudden feeling that that was just the sort of thing I had been warned not to say." In the course of human affairs, a certain amount of this mindless what-hoing is sadly inevitable: there's a desperate natterer inside every one of us. If we're lucky, there's also someone serene and unflappable in the offing, hovering, ready to stream in at the first hint of a crisis—a quiet voice whose response to the direst circumstances is never more alarmed than "Most disturbing, sir." The closest Wodehouse's work comes to—what ho—meaning is in the relationship between Jeeves and Bertie, which embodies a pretty potent fantasy of easy living: an idyllic household in which all our idiocies, our gaffes, our overindul-

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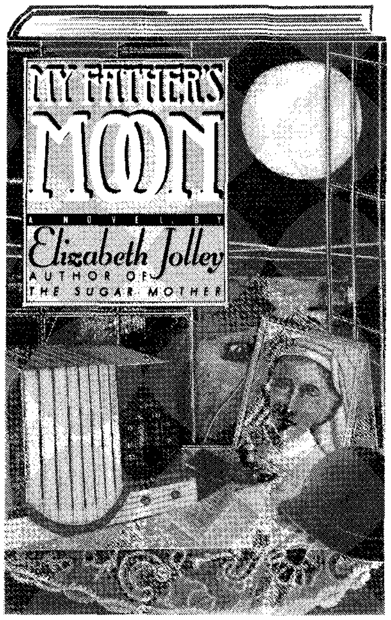

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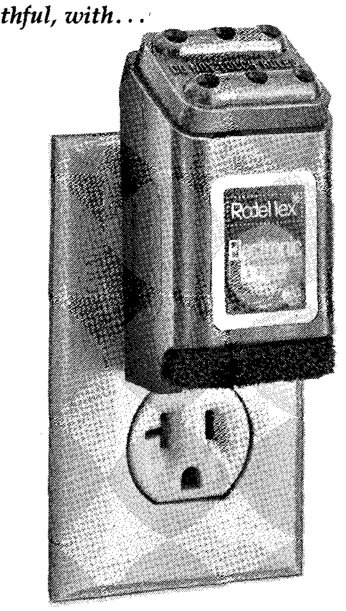
gences, our dopey schemes are without serious consequences. Our rummiest impulses are somehow redeemed. The miracle of the stories is that everything we find in them, except the laughs, is inadvertent. Wodehouse, the cool pro, doesn't mean to mean; he means only to give pleasure in the most efficient manner possible. He found a formula and stuck to it with an almost feudal loyalty. His attempts to deviate from the pattern were few, and relatively unsuccessful: there's one (latish) novel, "Ring for Jeeves," that is told in the third person and in which Bertie doesn't appear (Jeeves is temporarily in the employ of another young bubble-brain, the Earl of Rowcester), and one story, "Bertie Changes His Mind," that is told by Jeeves himself. Both of these one-shots feel a little strained; Wodehouse, uncharacteristically, seems to flounder.

The failure of "Bertie Changes His Mind" is, in a way, a clue to the mysteries of Wodehouse's art. Jeeves' narration feels wrong because some sort of linguistic ideal has been violated. The beauty of the pure-formula Bertie-and-Jeeves stories is that there's no such thing as normal, everyday discourse in any of them—nothing between the near-hysterical overstatement of Bertie's vivid slang and the equally extreme understatement of his valet's calm, measured responses. And these exaggerated verbal styles have to be mixed in exact proportions: Bertie's words poured out in a raging flood of deranged hyperbole, Jeeves' aimed with the utmost precision, in quick, cooling jets of pure reason. It's in Bertie's nature to go on and on, unable to stop himself, overreacting to the tiniest stimuli in his tiny social world. Describing a hangover: "I was feeling more or less like something the Pure Food Committee has rejected." On encountering a rather hefty opera singer who has come to call at his apartment: "She seemed to me a good deal like what Cleopatra would have been after going in too freely for the starches and cereals." Responding to an unpleasant surprise: "The merry laughter froze on my lips." In a buoyant mood, giving orders to Jeeves: "Lay out our gent's medium-smart raiment, suitable for Bohemian revels." Jeeves' style runs to variations on "Indeed, sir?" (In one memorable story, Bertie objects to the repetition of that phrase, and Jeeves switches to "Very good, sir.") Wode-



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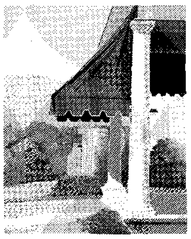

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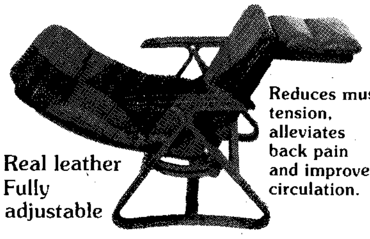

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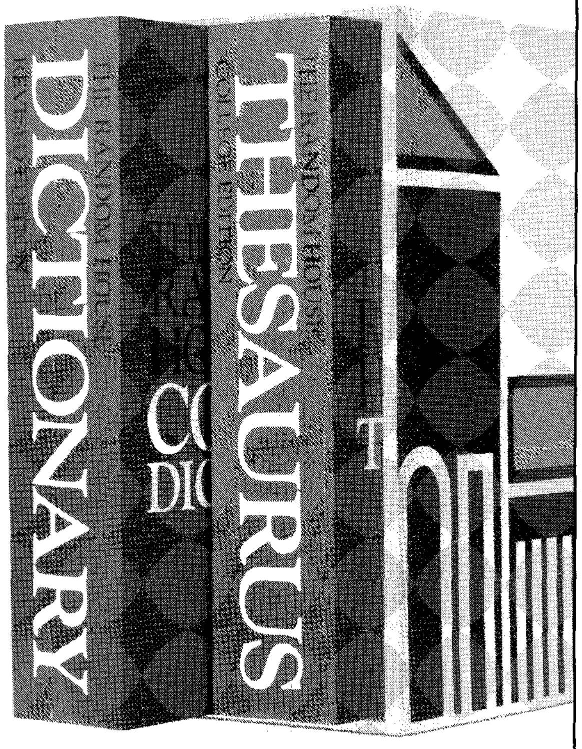

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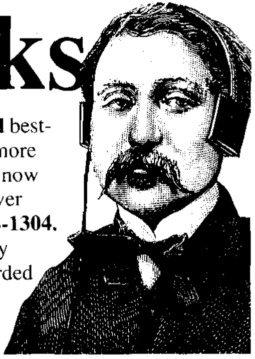

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house gets explosive effects from this verbal economy, too. When Bertie, waxing poetic, lets loose with something like "In the spring, Jeeves, a livelier iris gleams upon the burnished dove," the response is "So I have been informed, sir." These stories are, above all, a nearly exhaustive series of experiments in the comic possibilities of language.

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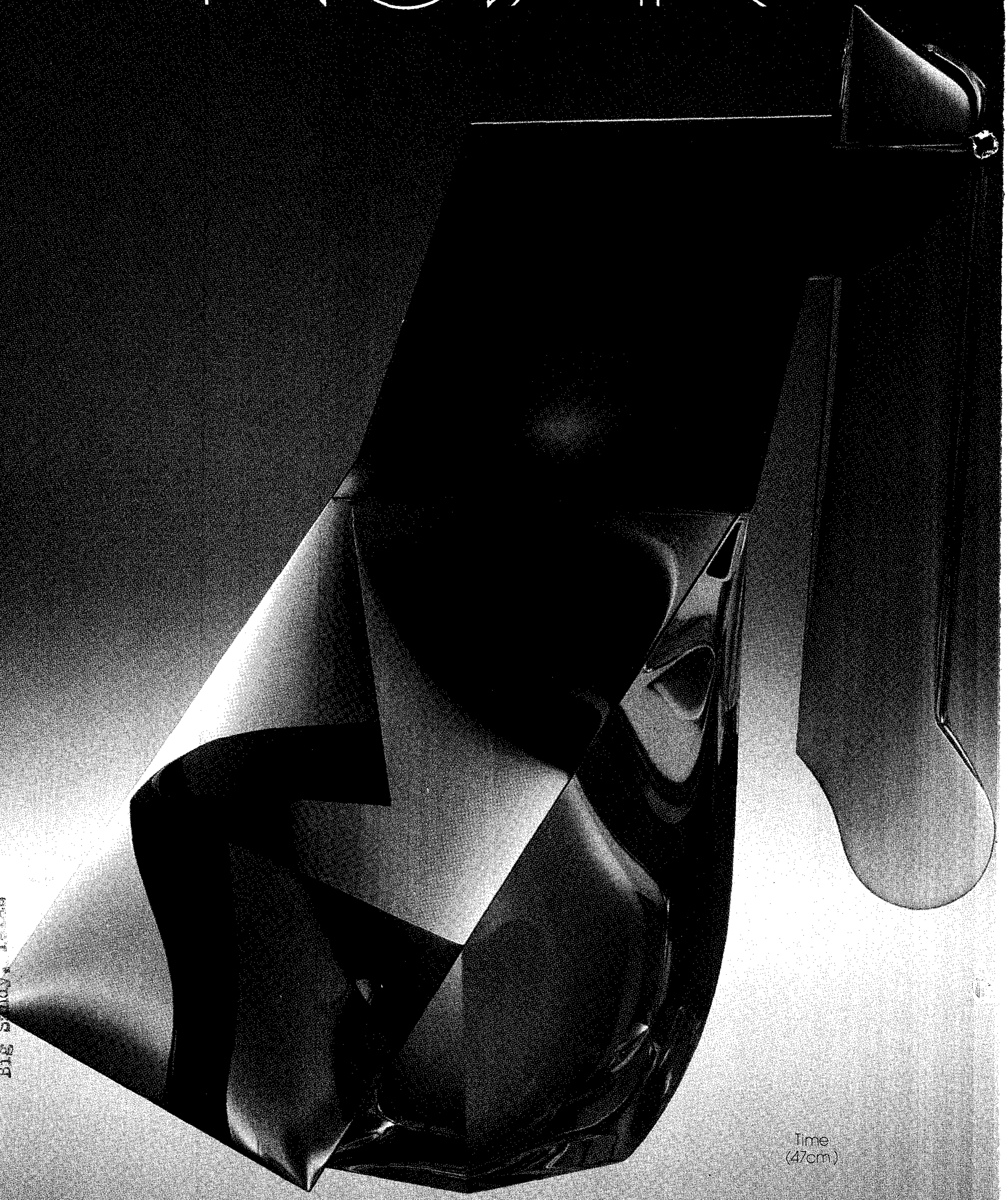

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